THE
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PART III

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Section III : ARUṆĀCALAMĀHĀTMYA
PŪRVĀRDHA[1]

CHAPTER ONE

The Manifestation of the Taijasa Liṅga— Aruṇācala

Obeisance to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

Now begins the *Pūrvārdha* ('First Half') of the narrative of the greatness of the excellent Aruṇâcala.[2]

1. He has the *Tripuṇḍra* (i.e. three parallel lines of ash as sectarian mark) on his forehead. In the middle of the forehead, he has a *Tilaka* (i.e. a circular or vertical sectarian mark) made with musk. He has a sparkling garland. A piece of cloth worn on his loins is his only garment. On his head he holds the king of serpents that cannot be subdued. He has the digit of the moon too. He is a lamp (i.e. a spiritual guide) unto all. Thus stands supreme the Yogin of Aruṇagiri.

Vyāsa said:

2-5. The sages residing in Naimiṣa forest said to Sūta: "We are desirous of hearing the greatness of Aruṇācala from you. Kindly recount its greatness."

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1. The third section of the *Māheśvarakhaṇḍa* of SkP is called *Aruṇācala-māhātmya*. It is divided into two parts. The first part consists of a dialogue between god Brahmā and Sanaka and contains thirteen chapters. The second part has a different pair of interlocutors, viz. Nandikeśvara and Mārkaṇḍeya and contains twenty-four chapters. There is the inevitable duplication of topics in these parts, but they are treated as different, as recorded in the *Nārada Purāṇa*, probably due to the difference in the pair of interlocutors.

2. Variously called: Aruṇagiri, Śoṇādri etc., all of which mean 'Red Mountain'. The hill is Tiruvannamalai in the South Arcot District of Tamil Nadu.

On being requested thus, Sūta spoke to those sages.

Śrī Sūta said:

Formerly Sanaka[1] asked the Four-faced Lord Brahmā the same thing. Listen attentively. I shall recount it to you now. It is conducive to the destruction of the sins of those who hear it devoutly.

Formerly, Sanaka bowed down to the lotus-seated Lord Brahmā who was residing in Satyaloka. Standing with palms joined in reverence, he asked him:

Sanaka said:

6. O Four-faced Lord of Devas, the support of the universe, one who can be known only through the Vedas, by your grace perfect knowledge has come to me.

7. Even by a single instruction, the entire range of knowledge reflects in the mirror of my mind which is cleansed with the sacred ash[2] of devotion to you.

8. Thanks to the benign glances of your who are the preceptor of the universe, I have fully acquired in an orderly manner the knowledge of (the cult of) Śiva, the essence of all the Vedas.

9. O receptacle of mercy, *Liṅgas* of Śiva, those on the earth, those in the heaven, and those belonging to human beings, to Siddhas, Bhūtas (Spirits) (have been heard of by me), O leader of Suras.

10. Tell me about the *Taijasa* ('Refulgent') *Liṅga* which is divine, free from impurities, capable of destroying the enemies (such as lust, anger etc.), the *Liṅga* which manifested itself in the continent (called) Jambū.

11. O storehouse of kindness, enlighten me (about the *Liṅga*) that is destructive of sins by merely remembering its

---

1. Sanaka—One of the four earliest mind-born sons of god Brahmā. The four brothers, viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra are generally grouped together as Sanakādi. But here Sanaka as an independant sage is intended by the author.

2. A pun on *Vibhūti* which means 'greatness' as in BG X.41 and also 'sacred ash' to be applied for purification.

name, that is eternal and grants the *Sārūpya* ('similarity of form') of Śiva.

12. Let that (knowledge) be imparted to me about the immutable, beginningless, fiery splendour of Śiva, the support of the universe, by the sight of which (splendour) one becomes happy (with all his objects achieved).

13. On hearing these eager and enthusiastic words (of Sanaka) endowed with devotion, the Lord (Brahmā), the storehouse of penance, became gracious unto him.

14. Seated on his lotus-seat, the Four-faced Lord meditated upon Śambhu for a long time and had his mind immersed in the ocean of internal bliss.

15. In the course of his meditation, he saw Śiva in the form of a column of fire in the manner he had already seen.[1] It had surpassed all supports and bases. On seeing it he became unaware of anything else.

16. Thereafter, in order to carry out the behest obtained from Śiva the Lord withdrew his heart from that Yogic state and remembered his son who had been bowing to him.

17. Due to the vision of Śiva his body had all its hair erected through the thrill of joy. His eyes were filled with the tears of joy, and he spoke in a faltering tone:

18-20. "O dear son, I have been reminded internally of you. Meditating on the ancient Yoga pertaining to Śiva, I remembered you and your respectful eagerness. It was on account of many performances of penance that great devotion to Śiva was engendered in you. My heart is attracted by it as it were in a moment. Those persons whose perpetual devotion to the calm and unagitated Sadāśiva increases, sanctify the entire universe by means of their own conduct.

21. Talking to, living with, playing with, mingling and mixing with, seeing and remembering devotees of Śiva is destructive of sins.

---

1. This refers to the manifestation of Śiva in the form of a beginningless and endless column of effulgence to Viṣṇu and Brahmā who were fighting with each other to establish their personal superiority at the beginning of creation of the world. Vide below vv 23-72.

22. May it be heard how that wonderful splendour of Śiva formerly manifested itself. It is called Arunâdri and it is full of natural mercifulness.

23. Nārāyaṇa and I, both of us are born of Sadāśiva whose rise surpasses (i.e. precedes) the entire universe and who engaged himself in the mental resolve 'Let me be many.'[1]

24. We began to argue mutually that we have been born naturally. With great haughtiness, we engaged ourselves in a combat in which we never became tired at all.

25. Observing our exceedingly terrible determination in our mutual fight, Īśvara, the very embodiment of mercy, thought thus:

26-30. 'What for is the fight between these two causing destruction to the worlds? They are having this idea (as the cause of dispute)—Creation is carried out by me; I am the protector.

These two are extremely mistaken and silly. If I do not reveal myself at this time to them and stop their battle, the whole universe will come to ruin. My greatness surpassing the entire universe is heard in the Vedas. Stupid and silly that they are with their faculty of memory impaired on account of anger, these two do not know it. Every creature thinks itself as exceedingly supreme. The wicked and foolish-minded one who does not accept another man's superiority meets with a downfall. If I demonstrate anywhere in the universe any proof of (the dimension of) my Ātman, someone through the perfect knowledge of that form may attain me.'

31. Deciding in his mind thus, Sadāśiva himself rose up as a column of fire in our midst while we were fighting.

32-36a. Going beyond all the worlds, he blazed all round like fire. Since the column had neither the beginning nor the end we remained there with our eyes agonized. On seeing the fiery column blazing, we became unnerved.

An ethereal voice rose up in front of us:

'Wherefore, O children of deluded minds, do you think of fighting? Śiva himself will decide about the inequality in your

1. An echo of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VI.2.3.

strength. Here stands the form of Śaṁbhu consisting of a fiery column. If you are able to see the end and the beginning (of this column of fire) you (may be considered) superior in strength.'

36b-37. On hearing these words, we desisted from the mutual combat. Viṣṇu and I set out to seek out that form of Śaṁbhu of the nature of the fiery column which was devoid of beginning and end.

38-43a. We endeavoured to see the beginning and ending portions (of the fiery column). Just as children try to grasp the moon in the sky reflected in water, so also we attempted to measure that refulgence.

Then with great zeal, Viṣṇu became a Boar of very huge body. For the investigation of its root, he dug up the interior of the earth. I assumed the form of a swan and flew up with great speed. Desirous of seeing his head, I flew up in the sky. Mādhava went down farther and farther tearing up the entire earth. He saw the fiery column appearing still farther down. Even after searching for many crores of years, he did not see the imperishable beginning. He became agitated and bewildered.

43b-45a. His curved teeth became shattered. All the joints (of his body) became loose and impaired. He became distressed due to fatigue. He was overwhelmed with thirst. Hari became unable to proceed further. He became too feeble and incompetent to retain as well as to get rid of the inimitable form of a boar. The consort of Ramā became weary and afflicted.

45b-52. The Lord of unmeasurable soul thought thus as his body became extremely tired, his glory faded and he had been exhausted due to his activity. He resorted to Śiva who is worthy of being a refuge: 'Fie upon this great stupidity of mine arising from arrogance whereby I did not realize my own Lord, my own self! This is indeed Śiva, the root cause of all Vedas, Devas and the worlds. How can there be a root (cause) unto him? It was from him alone that I have been born—from him who is devoid of beginning and end. (It is a pity) that I started to seek (the root cause of) Śiva after taking the physical form of an animal. By the favour of Śaṁbhu, my father, a kinsman of unpretended (i.e. sincere) kindness, I have regained this intellect enlightening my own Soul. If Śaṁbhu, the great Lord, himself wishes to protect anyone, he will have perfect knowledge immediately,

arising from his own soul and devoid of arrogance. Now I am (physically) unable to perform the worship of this preceptor of the universe. I shall dedicate myself to Śaṅkara and seek refuge in him.'

Thus Viṣṇu who dedicated his mind to (Śaṅkara's) eulogy, meditated on Śiva.

53-55a. On account of the excellent favour of the Lord of Goblins, he was once again lifted up on to the earth.

(Soaring up) I wandered in the sky for many years, with the eyes rolling and with wings feeble and slackened. I was extremely tired. In front of me I saw the column of fire, the splendour of Śiva worshipped by Suras, resembling a huge *Liṅga*,[1] being higher and higher still.

55b-61a. As I was desirous of seeing the eternal, ultimate extremity of Śaṁbhu and made attempts for the same, some Siddhas born of parts of his (Śiva's) splendour, saw me and spoke thus: 'Alas, it is true that this one still persists in his stupidity! Although the fall of his physical body is imminent, his arrogance has not left him. His wings are being shattered. He is extremely tired with rolling eyes. In vain will be this deluded (adventure on his part) in regard to Śiva of boundless refulgence. This Janārdana who had assumed the form of a boar and had been agitated in his mind thus, was turned back by Śiva himself, endowed with sincere mercifulness. From the atoms of the splendour of the Lord it is possible that crores of Suras, the chief of whom is Brahmā, may issue forth (i.e. be born). Still be who has come out of the self-same Ātman desires to see the limit of that Lord. If Lord Śiva thinks about this at the proper time and grants intelligence unto him (i.e. Brahmā), his arrogance may end.'

61b 67a. On hearing the sympathetic words of the Siddhas who spoke thus, my pride got shattered and I thought within myself: 'Neither by learning the (huge) collection of the Vedas nor by performing penances nor by frequenting the holy spots does the perfect knowledge of Śiva dawn upon (i.e. occurs to) me

1. This shows that Purāṇas regarded the *Liṅga* of Śiva as representing this beginningless and endless column of fire and *not* his phallus.

without the blessings of Śiva himself.[1] Even when the wings are shattered, when the limbs become feeble and benumbed, the mind still yearns for nurturing its arrogance. Fie upon me who have been overwhelmed by arrogance and who have not realized the strength of the Ātman! Perpetual obeisance to the Siddhas who have dedicated their minds to Śiva. My mind has become purified by the power of penance acquired by the contact with those Siddhas. Therefore, I know and realize Śiva, my own cause (i.e. source of birth) standing in front of me. All the Devas are endowed with prosperity and magnificence acquired therefrom. His grace will thereby continuously subdue their enemies.

67b-69a. I seek refuge in Śaṁbhu alone whose ultimate truth the Vedas along with the great *Āgamas*, do not understand. Śaṁbhu is different from the universe. Having regained my body I resorted devoutly to the moon-crested Lord Śiva and addressed the lotus-eyed Viṣṇu:

69b-72. 'Alas, what is this mysterious thing that has befallen even persons full of heroism. We are born of Śaṁbhu, yet we have become arrogant. He heard about our mutual quarrel that turned out to be extremely great. Lord Śaṅkara himself of unmeasurable soul dispelled the entire arrogance of both of us by revealing his own greatness. He who strives to worship this Sadāśiva, the Lord who is bowed down to by the Suras and who is of the form of a fiery column, shall become a boat (to cross) the ocean of worldly existence.'"

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1. This idea of the necessity of divine grace for self-realization is stated in Upaniṣads:

. . . .yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ, tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūṁ svām/
—*Kaṭha* I.2.23; *Muṇḍaka* 3.2-3

CHAPTER TWO

Greatness of the Immovable Liṅga of Śaṅkara

Brahmā said:

1. I recited the Vedas through all my mouths. After performing a mental worship, I eulogized Śiva with great devotion:

2. "Obeisance to the great Śiva, the sole cause of all the worlds. Salute to that Lord by whom everything is illuminated and sustained forever.

3. This splendour (of yours) always pervades the whole universe and illuminates it always. But those deprived of your grace, do not perceive it, like those who are born blind and (hence) do not see the sun.

4. This is indeed the *Bhūliṅga* (i.e. terrestrial Liṅga) without impurities. It is experienced (i.e. realized) by means of spiritual vision by your devotees, whether it is stationed within or without.

5. O Lord of Devas, this form of yours, that cannot be accurately defined, shines in the inner soul of the Yogin as though in a mirror.

6. Or, the *Śakti* of Śaṅkara is true; it is minuter than the minutest. It is not something different from me since it merges in me too.

7. The atom that becomes the recipient of your kindness certainly attains greatness. There is no one superior to you, nor to me because of my resorting to you.

8. The mind dedicated to you does not expect separation from you. How can speech function adequately in glorifying your greatness!

9. O Mahādeva, O Lord, be pleased yourself, O Lord superior to the universe. Command your diligent devotee in the requisite engagements."

10. After humbly submitting this, I bowed down again and again to the Lord of the Chiefs of Devas. Then with palms joined in reverence, I sat near the Lord.

11. Thereupon, making his words pure and blessed by means of the eulogies of Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu with a voice as majestic as the rumbling sound of a fresh cloud, spoke thus:

12. "Be victorious, O Overlord of the three worlds; be victorious, O Lord holding Gaṅgā. Be victorious, O Lord with uneven (three) eyes. Be victorious, O Lord with the crescent moon on the crest.

13. Unmeasured and genuine, O Śaṁbhu, is your compassion whereby the entire sin of the devotees has been washed off and perfect knowledge has been instilled.

14. (*Defective Text*) You maintain all *Vidyās*. You lead them to the status of Purāṇas by means of prosperities(?) Like a father you nurture and develop those having sons.[1]

15. O Īśāna, we are not capable of eulogizing (adequately) even a single idol from among the hundred of idols (of yours), by means of fresh prayers. What then about the collection (of all)!

16. You alone are competent enough to understand yourself, or by means of your grace. Does not a bee, having dragged a worm to itself, transform it into itself (a bee)?

17. Do the Devas not become lords by being born by a digit from you? Does the heated iron nail not have the power of burning?

18. Just as it is possible that there may be different kinds of fire due to difference in place, time, activity etc., so also although you are one, you become different as the objects differ.

19. O benevolent Lord Śaṅkara, reveal your form to us, the form that gives delight to our eyes, O support of all."

20. As we two bowed down with faith and devotion, as we two eulogized (him), Lord Śaṁbhu became extremely delighted.

21. From that column of effulgence, the Lord with the crescent moon on his crest came out as a person of tawny complexion with black throat.

22. With his (two) hands he was holding an axe and a fawn and with (his other two) hands he was giving (us) immunity from fear and rest. The Puruṣa, the Lord (himself) spoke to us as his sons.

23-24. "I am delighted with you both and your devotion to

1. *sa-putrāṇām*. But this should be emended as *su-putrāṇām* 'of good sons'.

me. You both have joined yourselves with the Ātman. You two shall be the lords of creation and sustenance.

Since I have manifested myself for the sake of your realization of what you two desire, choose another boon too. I have come to you as the bestower of boons."

25. At these words of the Lord, both of us became exceedingly delighted. With the palms joined in reverence, we individually expressed our respective wishes.

26. Making the three worlds mostly as my infant I eulogized the unconquered Īśāna by means of the Vedic *Mantras:*

27. "I bow down to the Lord of the form of this visible world, the perpetual bestower of boons, the great Lord full of refulgence, the unsullied one worthy of being meditated upon by Yogins.

28. The void space of the sky when filled with refulgence by you, O Lord, becomes in a moment the residence of Suras, which becomes one that is asked about and sought after.

29. Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Devas and great sages would not have lived in the firmament if they had not acquired the ability to move about in the sky through your refulgence.

30. Being scorched by your refulgence, the entire earth will cease to be capable of producing the mobile and the immobile living beings.

31. For the sake of blessing the worlds, withhold and withdraw your refulgence, and become an immobile *Liṅga* with the name Aruṇācala.

32. Those men who devoutly bow down to this fiery form named Aruṇācala become superior even to the immortal ones.

33. May all the worlds, Siddhas, great sages and different Gaṇas assume human form and serve you.

34. May the celestial trees beginning with *Kalpaka* growing in the divine gardens, serve you and thereby grow laden with different kinds of fruits.

35. Let the groups of the celestial medicinal herbs (be so). Let the animal species beginning with lions become calm and move about. Let there be washing off of the dirt of sins.

36. Though he has two different types of transit, the Sun will not transgress your peak while you are in the form of a *Liṅga.*

37. O Lord, be served through the dances and songs of celestial damsels, the sounds of the divine *Dundubhi* drums and conchs and showers of flowers.

38. Let the human beings who come to your presence, obtain immortality, Siddhahood, skill in alchemy and extreme bliss.

39. O Aruṇācala, may all men resorting to you obtain *Iśitva* (i.e. mastery over everything), *Vaśitva* (i.e. ability to win over others), *Saubhāgya* (i.e. good fortune) and *Kālavañcana* (i.e. ability to defy death).

40. Be visible on the earth through blessings granting all limbs, destroying all ailments and bestowing everything desired."

41. The Lord of Kamalā (i.e. Viṣṇu) too prayed in the same manner to Lord Śiva, the bestower of boons, the Lord of the Aruṇa mountain. He bowed down and spoke thus:

42. "Be pleased, O Lord of Śoṇa-Śaila (i.e. Aruṇācala), full of mercy. O Maheśa, you have manifested yourself for the sake of the welfare of all the worlds.

43. Just as I, by resorting to you, became capable of protecting the universe and acquired the husbandhood of Lakṣmī, so also let your devotees be so.

44. Your great and wonderful form cannot be adored by the persons of insufficient merits, O Lord whose foot and crest have not been seen by me and by Brahmā.

45. Those men who worship you by means of circumambulations, obeisances, dances, songs and adorations are blessed with all their sins gone.

46. Let those human beings who worship you by observing fasts, performing holy rites, sacrifices, offerings as well as adorations, become emperors.

47. O Lord of Aruṇācala, be in the vicinity of those who build and maintain parks, platforms, sacrificial halls and wells for freedom from adverse fate.

48-50. May a man who circumambulates you rolling on the ground, become endowed with all the eight *Aiśvaryas* ('superhuman powers'). Let him be immediately liberated from all sins. Let him be pure in mind. Let us both not leave off your lotus-like feet that should be meditated upon by all men who come to your vicinity."

After granting the boon saying "So be it" to Viṣṇu, the Moon-

created Lord assumed the state of an immobile *Liṅga* in the form of Aruṇācala.

51. Indeed this *Liṅga* which is well-known as Aruṇādri and is seen on the surface of the earth, is *Taijasa* (i.e. of fiery or effulgent nature) and the sole cause of all the worlds.

52. The ground near it is not at all touched by the four oceans that become agitated at the close of the *Yuga* and that have the extremities of the worlds submerged in them.

53. The great clouds beginning with Puṣkara fill the three worlds with drops of water of the size of elephants. They take rest on its ridge.

54. When the annihilation of all living beings takes place, when all created things are reabsorbed into *Prakṛti*, all the future seeds are certainly deposited there.

55. Brāhmaṇas who resort to the foot of that mountain are called again by me (i.e. Brahmā) after the deluge and I make them study the Vedas and make the collections thereof.

56. All the lores, arts, wealth of scriptures, *Āgamas* and the Vedas are truthfully well arranged there.

57. Sages of well-praised holy observances and rites, who abide within the caves of that mountain, shine with their matted hair. They have the refulgence of a crore of suns and fires.

58. Sadāśiva who is of the nature of *Nāda* (i.e. the divine sound) is seated on the *Akāropaṭhikā* (i.e. the pedestal of the letter '*A*') along with the five Vedic *Mantras* that assume the forms of the five syllables (i.e. *namaḥ śivāya*).

59. He is worshipped by the Guardians of the eight quarters always by means of the eight *Liṅgas*.

Having the eight physical forms,[1] he bestows the eight *Siddhis*[2] ('superhuman powers').

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1. The eight forms of Śiva are the five elements, the sun, the moon and the sacrificing priest. Cf. the *maṅgala (Nāndī)* of *Śakuntāla*. The names given to these in Tantra works are as follows:

(1) earth-form: *Sarva*; (2) water-form: *Bhava*; (3) fireform: *Rudra*; (4) wind-form: *Ugra*; (5) sky-form: *Bhīma*; (6) Yajamāna-form: *Paśupati*; (7) moon-form: *Mahādeva*; (8) sun-form: *Īśāna*.

2. These eight supernormal powers are enumerated as follows:

aṇimā laghimā prāptiḥ prākāmyaṃ mahimā tathā|
īśitvaṃ ca vaśitvaṃ ca tathā kāmāvasāyitā||

60. Siddhas leave off their own respective worlds and leading Suras abandon the Meru mountain and stay there (i.e. in Aruṇācala) waiting for their salvation.

61. Thus the entire collection of the ultimate fruits of all the merits of the earth is well-known as Aruṇācala. It yields devotion to devotees as a boon.

62. Śambhu, the bestower of all boons, of the nature of Śoṇaśaila (i.e. Aruṇācala) is worshipped by the groups of Devas coming from Kailāsa and the summit of Meru.

63. After hearing devoutly these words orally transmitted by the Lotus-born Lord, Śaṅkara became delighted in his mind. The son humbly bowed down to the father and asked him the essence of the Veda.

CHAPTER THREE

Pārvatī Goes to Kāñcī for Penance

Sanaka said:

1. O Lord, this wonderful greatness of the Lord of Aruṇācala has been heard by Śiva's grace as well as the favour shown by you, the preceptor of the universe.

2. This greatness is very wonderful. It is conducive to the destruction of all sins. Who are those who worshipped and propitiated the Śoṇa mountain, the bestower of boons?

3. Śiva who has neither the beginning nor the end, has assumed the form of Śoṇācala. O Lord, it is on account of the penance of you both that he has been abiding here for offering boons.

4. When the name Śoṇādri that yields salvation is uttered even once, all the desired objects come to one's presence. It is destructive of sins.

5a. The word *Śiva* has the taste of nectar. Let the procedure of the worship of Śiva and the story thereof (be described).

5b-6a. On hearing these words, Brahmā, the Lord of Devas, who is Mercy itself incarnate, spoke after bowing down to the Lord of Aruṇācala.

Brahmā said:

6b-9. O dear one, let the ancient legend of Pārvatī, how she resorted to the Lord of Aruṇācala and became happy, he heard.

Once Mahādeva, the Lord of Pārvatī, came to his divine gem-set throne fitted with festoons. It was as charming as the *Kalpa*-tree laden with gems as its fruit and flowers. It was covered with precious stones. It had a canopy bedecked with pearls. It was full of fragrance due to the clusters and nosegays of flowers and divine incense.

10. Swarms of bees from the hanging clusters of garlands hummed and hovered around it. The vehicle of Guha (i.e. the peacock) danced (near it) at the sound of the divine instruments of music, taking it for the sound of thunder.

11-12. Great elephants were afraid as the lion of Pārvatī moved (up and down). The stage (i.e. space) in front of it was resorted to exclusively by the dancing and singing celestial damsels. It was frequented by the Guardians of the Quarters. It was surrounded by prominent ascetics and Brāhmaṇa sages eulogizing (the Lord) with *Mantras* (selected) from the Ṛg (-), Yajur (-) and Sāma-Vedas and by gods, Siddhas and saintly kings.

13-17a. It was filled with the *Gaṇas* of different forms and sizes, whose bodies were adorned with sacred ash. They appeared handsome as they wore *Rudrākṣa* beads and were devoted to Śiva. It was fascinating with the tinkling sound of bells and the sounds of three types of musical instruments such as lute, flute, drum etc., mixed with the sounds of Vedic *Mantras*. With a desire to bless devotees, the Lord, the consort of Pārvatī, graced the great divine seat. Adopting the pure and auspicious form full of splendour, the glorious Lord, the storehouse of

mercy, sported along with Ambikā.

17b-23a. He delighted Pārvatī by means of music, diverse kinds of tales, different sorts of games at dice and the hideous dances of the *Gaṇas*. After bidding farewell to all the Devas, sages and the members of his court, and after granting different kinds of boons to devout people as desired by them, be sported about along with Umā in the parks of variegated and wonderful features abounding in flowers blossoming in all seasons, in rows and studded with gems and jewels; in the fascinating tanks with rows of steps studded with gems; on the peaks of the mountains of sports and pastime and in the groves of golden plantain trees. His fatigue due to these sports was dispelled by the gentle breeze that was cool (as it blew from) the waves of Gaṅgā and fragrant due to the full blown lotuses. In accordance with his desire, the Lord delighted goddess Śivā, his beloved one, the beautiful lady endowed with all felicity, the splendid one in the form of Rati.

23b-28a. The delighted goddess (like) a young girl of youthful simplicity, once thought her lover to be under her absolute control. So once, she went stealthily behind him. With her hands of lotus-like (tenderness and lustre) she sportingly closed the three eyes of Śambhu, the sire of the world, just out of curiosity to know what it was.

When the eyes in the forms of the moon, the sun and the fire respectively were closed, there appeared a terrible darkness of a very long duration. With half a moment of the Lord crores of (human) years passed by. The universe came to its destruction on account of the darkness caused by the playful sport of the goddess. The universe was filled all over with boundless darkness. Being deprived of the movement of the luminaries, the universe met with its destruction.

28b-33. Devas did not flourish nor did the Vedas shine. No living beings existed. Only the Unmanifest (i.e. *Prakṛti*) remained by itself.

On seeing this untimely destruction of the worlds, it occurred to those (venerable persons) who through their penance had

gained a flash of inspiration in their minds: '(What) is the source of this darkness causing destruction of the worlds. Certainly, the Lord, the immanent soul of everyone, has not impelled the god of Death. Playfully the goddess has closed the eyes of the conqueror of Tripura. Therefore, the entire unit of the three worlds has become deprived of light. If the three worlds have been pervaded by untimely darkness, what course is left to those of divine origin (i.e. gods) who have acquired their realms by means of penance? *Yajñas* are not being performed on the earth. Suras are not being worshipped.'

34. On determining this by their mental powers and observing this through their vision born of knowledge, those eternal *Sūris* (i.e. persons of spiritual wisdom) devoutly bowed down to Śambhu and prayed:

35. "Obeisance to Śiva, the Supreme Soul, the maker of the entire universe, who has assumed separate forms in the nature of *Śaktis* through *Māyā*.

36. The inevitable one primordial *Śakti* in the form of Śiva is the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation in a sportful manner.

37. She is half of your body, O Lord, Your body is in the form of Śiva and Śakti. Mahādeva is one and only one (without a second). O Lord, without you none else exists.

38. Thanks to your sporting activity, this world has met with untimely destruction. May your genuine mercifulness making the worlds flourish, increase.

39. Due to the withdrawal of lights for the duration of half a winking of yours, innumerable years of the worlds have gone by causing their destruction.

40. Therefore, be pleased, O Sadāśiva, the embodiment of mercifulness; O Kāla (i.e. god of Death), stop this destruction of the worlds initiated through love's sport."

41. On hearing these words of those devotees endowed with *Siddhis* the Lord, the embodiment of mercifulness, said, "O Gauri, leave off my eyes."

42. The goddess desisted from continuing the closure of the eyes of Hara in the form of the moon, the sun and the fire. The universe became bright and brilliant.

43. On being asked "How much time has passed?", Siddhas bowed down and said, "Along with your half a winking crores of (human) years have elapsed."

44. Looking smilingly at his beloved, the exceedingly liberal-minded Lord, the embodiment of mercy, spoke about a few points of great piety and righteousness:

45-47. "O pretty girl of youthful simplicity! You have done this thoughtlessly as it caused the destruction of the world. I regard it improper on your part, you being the mother of the universe. I too destroy all the worlds when the proper time of dissolution comes. On account of your immaturity the worlds have met with destruction at the most improper time.

Which lady (in a position) like you will commit this sort of improper action despised by good people, even for fun? A person who is an embodiment of sympathy and mercy does not harass (others)."

48. On hearing these words of Śaṁbhu she became agitated, because she was afraid of the loss of *Dharma*. The beloved wife of the Lord asked him, "What shall I do in order to countervail it?"

49. Being pleased at that repentance and devotion of the goddess, Lord Śiva, the storehouse of sympathy, spoke:

50. "You constitute my own person. Hence what expiation is to be suggested? Still, this path of virtue is being maintained by you.

51-52. (*Defective Text*) You are the embodiment of *Śrutis*, *Smṛtis*, holy rites, liturgical texts, lores, Devas and others. I am the great principle (?) and am identical with it. You, the goddess inseparable from me, should be one entertaining a desire for creating the worlds.

53. Hence the expiatory rite for you is being laid down in the manner befitting the world.

After pondering over *Śrutis* and *Smṛtis Dharma* has been ascertained as of six types.

54. If it is not abided by the master it is likely to be abandoned by the dependents and followers. I am not able to stay anywhere even for a single moment after leaving you.

55. I myself shall perform the entire penance, stationed in

the Ātman. The entire earth shall be fruitful through your penance.

56. By the contact with your lotus-like feet and the sight of your penance and your own presence (the people) will dispel the trouble caused by defilement.

57-58. Perform meritorious deeds for the uplift of the land of *Karmans*. On observing your austere rites in the world, all the people will have firmer inclination towards righteousness. There is no doubt about it. Your sympathy will make the earth contented and blessed through your activities in maintaining piety and virtuousness. You have been told about all these things, O gentle lady, by the eternal Vedas.

59-63. There is a city named Kāñci.[1] It is endowed with all riches and is well-known. It is a direct representation of heaven full of Devas on the surface of the earth. It is said that any penance performed there has infinite benefits.

Devas and all the sages desire to stay there forever. There (is a river) well-known as Kaṃpā.[2] It is destructive of all great sins. Crores of sins of the men staying there tremble (with fear).

There is one mango tree there.[3] It shines with perpetual sprouts. It has perfectly cool shade along with flowers, fruits and sprouts. *Japa*, *Homa* and charitable gifts performed there yield infinite benefits.

64. Let the Gaṇas of different forms and sizes, Ḍākinīs, the groups of Yogins and others, the chief of whom is Viṣṇu serve you all round.

65. I shall be devoid of attributes and be undivided. I shall be present in your lotus-like mind. O gentle lady, do not become agitated due to separation from me."

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1. Kāñci—Kanchipuram on the river Palar in Tamil Nadu 43 miles south-west of Madras. The eastern portion of the town is Vaiṣṇavite (Viṣṇu-Kāñci) and the western portion is Śaivite (Śiva-Kāñci). Śiva hereof is known as Ekāmranātha (with Kāmākhyā as his consort). It contains the famous Tīrtha Śiva Gaṅgā. One of the seats of Śaṅkarācārya is here.

2. Probably the river Palar.

3. According to authority the Ekāmra is a single mango tree under which, it is described in *Aruṇācala Māhātmya*, Pārvatī had performed penance. It has been flourishing in the temple of Ekāmreśvara at Kāñci from time immemorial. It appears that god Śiva got his name Ekāmreśvara from this "Single Mango Tree".

66. On being told thus by the Lord of Devas, the goddess, with surprise in her eyes, went near Kaṁpā along with her friends in order to perform penance.

67-68. On seeing Kaṁpā, the river without impurities resorted to by groups of ascetics, and the single mango tree *Ekāmra* with tender sprouts, warding off the (evil) eye, laden with fruits and flowers and completely agitated with the chirping sound of cuckoos, she became pleased. Then she remembered Lord Maheśvara.

69. With her limbs enveloped by the fire of love, she became as though emaciated on account of penance.

Gaurī addressed Vijayā who was present near her at her side.

70-72. Her limbs were enveloped by (the feelings of) love and grief (because) she was agitated on account of the separation from Purāri (i.e. Śiva): "I have come here for perpetually worshipping the Lord, the dispeller of sins, by means of austerities. But this single mango tree, the kinsman of the god of Love, with fresh outcome of sprouts and flowers reminds me (of Śiva). My mind has been agitated much by the mind-born lord of love. How can I bear the separation from Śiva? Therefore the sole antidote for the same is seen in remembering the feet of the Lord who has the young moon on his crest."

CHAPTER FOUR

Pārvatī Goes to the Hermitage of Gautama

Brahmā said:

1. After bowing down to the Mother of the universe and consoling her by means of hundreds of eulogies from the scriptures of Śiva (?) Vijayā said to her:

2. "O goddess, you are always inseparable from Lord Śaṁbhu. You are the goddess of his very life, the only Śaktī of that Supreme Soul.

3. You wish to show your own Māyā in such a way that Īśāna does not himself reveal any separate existence (from you).

4. It was only after receiving his command that you have come (here), O Pārvatī. The behest of Śaṁbhu regarding service (unto him) should never be transgressed by you.

5. Abstaining from all desires, you who have resorted to Śaṁbhu, should perform the penance in this place assigned to you by Śiva.

6. Even otherwise, the protection of the universe is under your control, O goddess identical with the universe. The protection and further maintenance of *Dharma* is yours along with Śiva.

7. Eagerly meditating on Śiva who is devoid of divisions and parts, and stationed in your own soul, O Pārvatī, you will not at all remember the pangs of separation.

8. All your leading devotees will take up your conduct (as the ideal to be followed). O gentle lady fondly devoted to *Dharma*, let it spread in the world by preaching."

9. On hearing her statement thus, Gaurī perfectly steadied her mind and began to perform penance on the splendid baoks of the river Kaṁpā.

10. Setting aside her ornaments of various kinds, she adorned herself with clusters (i.e. rosaries) of Rudrākṣa beads. Laying aside the divine garments, she wore two auspicious bark garments.

11. She immediately turned artistically her forelocks into matted hair. Giving up (the use of) saffron (as unguent), she besmeared her entire body with holy ash.

12. Gleaning ears of corn alone with the deer, she became contented (with what she got as food). Strictly maintaining her observances, she continuously repeated the five-syllabled *Mantra* of Śiva (i.e. *Namaḥ Śivāya*).

13. She took bath three times a day in the clear limpid waters of Kaṁpā. She made a *Liṅga* of sand and worshipped it respectfully.

14. She removed the fatigue and weariness of all living beings by planting trees, making charitable gifts and worshipping guests without leaving anyone. Thus, the goddess observed the code of religious conduct.

15. She performed penance seating herself in the middle of five fires during summer; she lay on the bare ground during

rainy season and she remained in water during early and late winter.

16. She caused surprise in the minds of meritorious-souled great sages who came to visit her. She respectfully adored them.

17. Sometimes she herself gathered and brought from the forests bunches of flowers along with sprouts and sat down for cleansing them particularly.

18. On the sacred banks of Kaṁpā, she made a *Liṅga* out of sand and began to worship it with the ancillary rites of *Nyāsa*[1] and *Āvāhana* ('invoking').

19. After duly worshipping the Sun with red flowers and sandal paste, she gradually worshipped Śaṅkara equipped with five converings.

20. She looked in front of her Iśāna, the cause of welfare, made perceptible by means of incenses, lamps, food offerings etc. with feelings of devotion.

21-22. (Once) Lord Śiva himself, to test Aṁbikā, caused a big flood in the river Kaṁpā (which) surrounded her. On seeing that exceedingly great flood approaching, the friends said to Aṁbikā who was seated (there) in the course of her holy observances:

23. "O goddess, get up. A big flow of water is rushing on. It will fill the quarters quickly and flood everything."

24. As she was in her meditation with closed eyes, she heard these words. On opening her eyes she saw that unparalleled force of the current of waters of the river.

25. Worried at the possibility of an obstacle in her worship, the goddess thought: 'What shall I do? I cannot forsake the worship that has been begun.

26. Generally it is in the case of meritorious-souled persons that the association of holy rites, the bestower of desired benefits, is actively conducive to the acquisition of welfare without obstacles on the earth.

27. This *Liṅga* made of sand will be swept away by the unparalleled force of the current. If the *Liṅga* is destroyed good devotees should give up their lives.

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1. *Nyāsa*—Mental assignment of various parts of one's body to the tutelary deities—MW 572 A.

28. This flood is created by the Māyā of Śiva. It comes to test *Ātman* whether it is endowed with devotion to his feet or not.

29. With my pair of arms, I will closely embrace this *Liṅga* and will remain here unaffected and unagitated': "Dear friends, all of you go far off quickly."

30. After saying thus, Aṁbikā closely embraced the *Liṅga*. Although she was engulfed by the speedy flow, she did not let it go.

31. The nipples of her breasts pressed so hard against the *Liṅga* that an impression was left appearing like a scar on it. Then (the goddess) respectfully bowed down to the *Liṅga* clinging to it.

32. Remembering Sadāśiva, she experienced a thrill all over her body making her hair stand on end. She remained with her eyes closed and her heart engrossed solely in meditation.

33. She was motionless and did not want to be separated even for a moment from that *Liṅga* which caused tremor, perspiration, protection, bashfulness and love-sport in her.

34. A certain (mysterious) incorporal divine voice addressed her: "O girl, leave off that *Liṅga*. The great flood has receded.

35. The sandy *Liṅga* worshipped by you will have a perpetual greatness. O exalted lady, it will be worshipped by Suras and will be a bestower of boons.

36. On seeing your penance (a test of your observance of Dharma) has been arranged. Let human beings become blessed and satisfied by bowing down to this *Liṅga*.

37. I shall assume an effulgent form and stay here under the name *Aruṇācala* for the sake of (men's) achievement of *Siddhi* on the surface of the earth (itself).

38. The word *Ruṇa* means collection of sins because it prevents a man from all the worlds. When the good is seen there is no *Ruṇa*. Hence *Aruṇācala*.[1]

39. The sages, Siddhas, Gandharvas and noble-souled Yogins leave off the peak of Kailāsa (mountain) and of Meru and resort to this (mountain).

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1. A strange etymology. The word *ruṇa* is probably a Sanskritization of some local word.

40. Formerly, in order to dispel the delusion of Brahmā and Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) who were born of a part of mine but were fighting with each other, I stood here (between them) in the form of a fiery brilliance.

41. My crest was not seen by Brahmā who assumed the form of a swan and my foot was not seen by Viṣṇu who took the form of a boar. I was bowed down to by them with devotion.

42. Then I was pleased. I become visible to them. I granted them the boons desired by them. I granted them proficiency in the protection of the three worlds.

43. Requested once again by them I assumed this fiery form with the name *Aruṇācala*. I was persuaded by them to assume the state of an immobile *Liṅga*.

44. Go to Sage Gautama of exalted fortune and ask him about devotion unto me. After hearing about the greatness of Aruṇâcala, perform penance there.

45. There I shall reveal to you the effulgent form of mine for the sake of dispelling all sins and for the sake of the welfare of the worlds."

46. On hearing these words uttered by Śiva, the entire one without divisions, the goddess said "So be it" and began to go immediately.

47. Then looking with affectionate eyes all the Devas and sages who had followed her for rendering service to her, Aṁbikā spoke:

48. "O Devas, and the sages of steady holy observances, stay here on the sacred banks of Kaṁpā maintaining your holy vows.

49. Let this *Linga* made of sand and marked by (my) breast and bangles be worshipped by you. It causes the destruction of all sins and increases all types of good fortune.

50. Day and night I assume an entire, undivided, attributeless form and propitiate this Śoṇeśvara, the bestower of boons, by means of *Mantras*.

51. In this world let all types of desired prosperity be achieved due to my performance of the penance and observance of piety and righteousness as well as by seeing the *Liṅga* (installed) by me.

52. I am called Kāmākṣi on account of my bestowing everything desired. Let my devotees here obtain the desired boon after bowing down to me under the name Kāmākṣi as they please.

53. Indeed I shall go to the mountain Aruṇācala and carry out the behest of Śaṁbhu, the Lord of Devas, the Lord of unobstructed prowess.

54. I shall go there, perform a severe penance and please Śaṁbhu. Afterwards you all shall gather together and see me when I will have obtained the boons."

55. After instantly bidding farewell thus to all the good devotees serving her feet, the gentle 'girl' went to Aruṇācala for the sake of penance at the bidding of Śaṅkara.

56-58. She was perpetually served by female friends and attendants devotedly. She approached the Lord of Aruṇācala for whom the divine *Dundubhi* drum was sounded. Though the Lord of Aruṇācala is of a fiery nature, he is internally quiescent. He is worshipped by the celestial damsels through dances, songs and showers of flowers. With great enthusiasm she bowed down to the immobile *Liṅga* and saw the group of Siddhas, Yogins and sages.

59-60. Atri, Bhṛgu, Bharadvāja, Kaśyapa, Aṅgiras, Kutsa and Gautama as well as Siddhas, Vidyādharas and the immortal ones always perform penance here for the sake of getting the expected boons. Gaṅgā and other rivers serve and attend to him all round.

61. "This is a divine *Liṅga* remembered as Aruṇādri (or Aruṇācala). Salute." On being told thus by the Suras, she bowed down again and again.

62. On being requested to receive their hospitality by all the great sages, she said, "As per order of Śiva, Gautama should be seen by me."

63. She went to him as he was pointed out by the sages saying, "He is here". That sage was the first and foremost among the devotees of Śiva. He was a storehouse of austerities.

64-65. He had gone to the forest in the morning for fetching sacrificial twigs, *Kuśa* grass and fruits after bidding the disciples of steadfast holy rites, "Worship the guests who come to the hermitage." The righteous-souled sage went to the forest. Then she came to the hermitage to see Gautama.

66-71a. When the disciples were asked, "Where has the sage gone?", they said, "He will come back in a short while." After saying this, she was received by the disciples standing up in honour of her arrival, and offered fruits, roots, sweet scents, a seat, water to wash the feet, *Arghya* and courteous words of welcome. She was duly honoured with fruits and roots that constitute the assets of the disciples. They said to her, "Please wait for a moment." Others went near her.

The moment the goddess entered it, the great hermitage of the noble sage became one full of jewel-set mansions with plenty of requisite furnishings.

After returning from the forest carrying sacrificial twigs, *Kuśa* grass and fruits, the eminent sage saw from far his hermitage sparkling splendidly with hundreds of vehicles. He thought with wonder, 'What is this?' By means of his vision born of knowledge, he saw that Gaurī had come there.

71b-73. In order to see Mother of the worlds, he hastened (back to the hermitage). The disciples, with great haste, intimated to him the news.

The great sage thought that her arrival was the fruit of his own penance. It was coupled with the kindness of Śiva. With great eagerness he came into the hermitage. He who was fond of those who resorted to him, came to the hermitage, thinking about all these things.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Greatness of Brahmapuṣkara

Brahmā said:

1. Śivabhakti (? Śivaśakti), Śiva's devotion (? Śiva's power), identical with the universe prepared to welcome the quiescent Gautama who came back to the door of the hut from the forest.

2. She saw Gautama served by his disciples as he returned. His head was covered with long flowing hair. His face was fully covered with a beard.

3. He shone like fire with flames on account of the exceedingly copper-coloured matted hair that had become clean and pure on account of the holy bath in the *Tīrtha* and in which beads of *Rudrākṣa* had been placed.

4. He was resplendent with the *Tripuṇḍra* marked with sacred ash on his wide forehead. He wore a white sacred thread as well as rosaries of *Rudrākṣa* beads.

5. He wore two red bark garments. His body was lean and emaciated due to penance. He repeated many Vedic *Mantras* causing delight to Rudra.

6. On account of his highly dignified speech he was (as if) possessed by Śaṁbhu and hence had a sameness (of the exalted tone like that) of Śaṁbhu. He was full of kindness and was a treasure of refulgence like the veritable Sun-god.

7. On seeing that noble-souled old sage who had resorted to the feet of Śaṁbhu, Gaurī joined her palms in reverence and began to bow down to him.

8. On seeing the Mother of the entire universe with palms folded in reverence, the sage wondered what the matter was. Preventing (her from bowing down), he himself saluted her.

9. "O Gaurī of great magnificence, welcome (unto you). O mother of the worlds, O storehouse of mercy, under some pretext you have come here to protect the devotees.

10. O goddess worthy of being honoured, it was as though you had realized an objective worthy of being respected formerly. Assuming separateness, we have come here along with (her) disciples and others. (*obscure*)

11. O goddess, if you have no sportive flash of your own Māyā, how can the worldly existence continue to be? (*obscure*)

12. Let it be. I am not competent to speak of the sportive flash of your own Māyā which it is ever impossible to decide specifically by your (people i.e. devotees). (*obscure*)

13. Be pleased to sit on the clean holy seat made of *Kuśa* grass. Let the *Pādya* and *Arghya*[1] duly offered by me be accepted."

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1. After giving water to a guest on his arrival to wash his feet (*Pādya*) he was traditionally worshipped by offering *Arghya* consisting of water, flowers, *dūrvā* grass, unbroken grains of rice.

14. After saying this, the old sage devoutly worshipped Aṁbikā who was seated on the excellent seat made of *Darbha* grass brought by the disciples.

15. After completing the entire worship, (the sage) endowed with the feelings of devotion, himself sat on a seat after being permitted by Gaurī.

16. Washing the faces of the quarters with the moon-light-like splendour of his teeth, with the hair standing on end all over his body through joyous thrill, he spoke in a choked voice with tears of joy:

17. "Oh, the greatness of lord Śaṁbhu of unmeasured splendour! The Lord fond of his devotees has directed you to protect good devotees.

18-20. O Aṁbā, is there anything not acquired, anything else yet to be obtained, by you? It is to point out the greatness of devotion that god Śiva (has directed you). The events at Kailāsa, the stay on the banks of Kaṁpā for penance and the directive of Aruṇācala—all this is known to me. O highly fortunate lady, you have yourself come to this hermitage of your devotee, out of affection. O goddess, the embodiment of mercifulness, tell me what I am to do."

21. On hearing these words of that great sage who knew everything, Aṁbika eagerly spoke to him eulogizing him:

22. "This is the great magnificence of yours that Śiva, the Lord of Devas, himself commanded me that you should be seen. Among all the ascetics (it was you that he selected).

23. You are master of the Vedas and the *Āgamas* uttered by Śiva. It is on account of your penance that among the devotees of Śiva, you alone are (regarded as) the most honoured one by Śiva.

24. 'I am staying here by the name Aruṇācala', said Śiva. The greatness of this *Acala* (mountain) should be heard directly from you.

25. I have come to the presence of Aruṇācala in order to perform penance. It is only due to the sight of Your Holiness that Īśa himself becomes delighted.

26. (The opportunity) to converse with the devotees of Śiva and to worship *Śivaliṅga*—this is the benefit of being embodied (born) in the world.

27. Hence, this greatness orally transmitted by you directly should be heard by me. Due to your knowledge and teaching, you are clearly (like) a father unto me."

28. On hearing her words, Gautama, the storehouse of austerities, recounted the greatness of Aruṇācala after meditating on Giriśa:

29. "Whatever is being asked by you, as though it is not known to you, I know that you alone are the *Māyā* of Śiva, which is the (repository) of all knowledge.

30. Listening to the greatness of Śiva uttered by a devotee and to the teachings of Śaṁbhu (handed over to them)—this is the cause of your delight.

31. Those who glorify or listen to the glorification of Śiva in the world attain the same merit as the study and recitation of the Vedas.

32. All the austerities performed by me have become fruitful today, because I glorify the greatness as heard (by me) and as directed by Śaṁbhu.

33-39a. This wonderful greatness (has been obtained by me) by the favour of Śiva and Śivā.

O lady of faultless limbs, let this great ancient lore, the greatness of Aruṇācala, the cause of the destruction of sins, be heard. Listen how the *Liṅga* in the form of Aruṇācala manifested itself formerly.

The entire greatness of Aruṇācala cannot be expressed with a crore of mouths by a crore of Brāhmaṇas. Lord Śiva, the Lord of Aruṇācala, has been worshipped for the attainment of the eight (super-human powers) by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, the Moon, the Sun, the Fire-god and the Guardians of the Directions beginning with Indra. He has been adored by Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Vidyādharas, serpents, birds, divine sages and Siddhayogins for dispelling different kinds of sins, for fulfilling different kinds of wishes. This Lord has thus been propitiated.

39b-42a. On being visited, the Lord dispels sins, On being served he bestows whatever is desired. If he is glorified as Śoṇādri (i.e. Aruṇācala) by the people even from far he bestows salvation. The Yogins who meditate in their minds on the form of the

column of effulgence well-known as Aruṇādri, shall obtain salvation in the form of *Sāyujya* ('perfect merger') with Śiva. What is given as charitable gift, whatever is offered as *Homa*, the *Japa* performed and the penances practised in the presence of Aruṇācala acquire everlasting benefit.

42b-46. Brahmā and Viṣṇu who are born of parts of the splendour of Śiva, became proud and arrogant. With a desire to conquer each other, they fought arrogantly. In order to quell their pride, Sadāśiva, worthy of being meditated upon by Yogins, assumed the form of fiery splendour devoid of beginning, middle and end. Illuminating the ten quarters, he stood in between them. In order to see the beginning and end portions of that fiery column (Brahmā and Viṣṇu) assumed the forms of a swan and a boar and went to the firmament and to the nether worlds. On seeing them weary and distressed, the Lord, the storehouse of mercy, appeared in front of them and granted them the boon they desired.

47. On being requested by them the Lord of Devas assumed the form of an immobile *Liṅga*, well-known as Aruṇādri. He shines calmly yet brilliantly.

48. This effulgent *Liṅga* is always worshipped to the accompaniment of the sounds of divine *Dundubhi* drums, the songs and dances of celestial damsels and hundreds of showers of flowers.

49. Formerly ninety-six Brahmās had come up and passed away. Then a Brahmā came out of the navel of Viṣṇu and created the worlds.

50. Once that Brahmā was requested by Indra who was desirous of causing obstacles to the penance of Yogins. (So) he created a lovely and graceful woman.

51. On seeing that lotus-eyed lady full of graceful charms and other good qualities, Brahmā was pierced in his heart by the arrows of Kandarpa (i.e. god of Love). He became deluded.

52. On observing the lotus-seated Brahmā desirous of touching her, the excellent celestial damsel bowed to him and under the pretext of circumambulating him, she wished to go away.

53. While she was devoutly circumambulating, there sprang up four faces of Brahmā in the four directions instantaneously.

54-57. That maiden then assumed the form of a bird and flew into the sky. On seeing him approaching in the form of a bird, she resorted to Aruṇācala seeking refuge.

'You are the Lord whose foot and head have not been seen by Brahmā and Viṣṇu. O Lord of Aruṇācala, protect me. O Lord worthy of giving refuge, I have sought refuge in you.'

While she was lamenting with excess of agony and fright, a certain hunter wielding a bow rose up from the immobile *Linga* Aruṇācala. He had the lustre of the sky overcast with clouds and he had fixed an arrow to his bow. When the hunter was seen in front (of him) his (Brahmā's) delusion was dispelled.

58-63a. Then the Lotus-born Lord became extremely humble and delighted in his heart. Then he bowed down to the Lord of Śoṇādri who is worthy of being resorted to:

'Obeisance to you, the cause of the destruction of all sins, to the Lord wielding the Pināka bow. Obeisance to Śaṁbhu who has assumed the form of Aruṇācala and who is under the control of his devotees. Who, other than you, is competent to make his ignorant devotees refrain from misdeeds? This is impossible for (ordinary) persons to do. Destroy my physical body with your splendour because it has become sinful by (bad) intention. O Lord, the immanent soul of the universe, create another Brahmā for the purpose of the creation of the worlds.'

On hearing these words of Brahmā who was in a wretched condition, Śiva, the moon-crested Lord, the embodiment of mercy said:

63b-67a. 'The period that has been formerly allotted to you cannot be changed or taken back. Which person in a position of power, defects such as *Rāga* (attachment) and others do not affect? Hence even if you are far way, worship this fiery *Linga* named Aruṇācala for dispelling all defects. All sins whether they are mental, verbal or physical perish quickly by visiting Aruṇācala. This Aruṇācala is destructive of all the sins of men through circumambulations, prostrations, recollections, worships and eulogies.

67b-71. I can rarely be seen in Kailāsa, peak of Meru or in my abodes on the various *Kula* mountains. I myself am Aruṇā-

cala, on seeing the peak of which people will not only have the benefit of having their eyes but also the destruction of all sins and the acquisition of the vision born of knowledge.

Brahmā, born of a part of mine, formerly took his bath in Brahma Puṣkara[1] named after him. Thereby the delusion of that Lord of the universe vanished. You too take your bath in this Brahma Tīrtha, worship me, keep your palms joined in reverence, keep silent and circumambulate me. O soul of the universe, you will become free from ailments.'

72. Maheśa, the Lord of the universe, remained in the form of Aruṇācala after uttering these words. The Lotus-born Lord had a plunge in the lake. He duly worshipped the Lord, the destroyer of sins.

73. With his mind purified by means of the Yogic exercises of *Yama*, *Niyama* etc., the Creator duly worshipped the Lord of Aruṇācala clearly and with all requisite offerings and services. Thereby his sins being dispelled, he regained the lordship (of the universe)."

CHAPTER SIX

Description of Various Haly Places at Aruṇācala[2]

Gautama said:

1. Once upon a time, formerly, in another *Kalpa*, Nārāyaṇa was lying on his serpent couch in the vast ocean and he did not wake up.

1. The beautiful lake Puṣkara near Ajmer in Rajasthan is famous since Mahābhārata days. Its association with god Brahmā is well-known in Purāṇas. We still have a famous temple of god Brahmā there.

2. This chapter tries to enhance the importance of Aruṇācala by showing in it the concentration of all important Tīrthas in the world. These Tīrthas are located on the way of the *Parikramā* or circumambulation of Aruṇācala.

2. The eternal *Sūris* (i.e. great sages) saw that even at the end of the *Kalpa* the universe was enveloped in darkness, lying concealed and featureless. They were deeply grieved at this.

3. 'Alas! the form of this darkness enchants and deludes the entire universe whereby even now at the end of the *Kalpa*, Viṣṇu does not get up.

4. When the perfect luminous *Puruṣa* cannot be seen, how can Suras get peace from the darkness that attacks (them)?'

5. After resolving thus in their mind they thought of the Lord of Umā, the Lord of Devas, the unsullied mass of refulgence, stationed in the *Ātman*.

6. Then Lord Maheśvara, the mass of refulgence, became pleased. He was requested to protect the universe by the eternal wise sages who bowed down.

7. Then thirty-three crores of Devas emanating from the rays of the flames of Śaṁbhu in the fiery form came forth.

8. On being awakened by all the Devas, the Lord of Ramā got up, found that it had completely dawned and thought thus in his mind:

9. 'Since *Tamas* (i.e. darkness) had predominated I slept at a wrong time. For the sake of waking me up Sadāśiva himself, the great luminary, had to be seen.

10. He himself attempts to carry out the duties of creation of the universe. What other function has to be carried out by me in this matter or by the Self-born Lord Brahmā?

11. Fie upon me who remained ignorant of the *Ātman*, with the mind overpowered by sleep ! I shall seek refuge in Śaṅkara, the maker of all.

12. The vision of Śaṁbhu quells all defects. It bestows all the desired benefits. It is sacred. It is difficult for the persons deficient in merit to get it.'

13. Meditating thus on Sadāśiva, the fiery *Liṅga* stationed in the *Ātman*, Hari devoutly bowed to the Lord frequently with the eight limbs (touching the ground).

14-20. Then Śaṁbhu in the form of refulgence, the Lord who was worthy of being sought refuge in, blessed (Lord Viṣṇu) who had sought refuge, by means of benign glances and spoke to him, "Get up."

After getting up, he eulogized Śaṁbhu, the Lord who had created the universe, who dispelled sins, who was full of mercy and who had the crescent moon on his crest:

"Obeisance to the Lord of the three worlds, to the Lord who has three forms corresponding to the three *Guṇas*. Obeisance to you with the body of the three Devas, to the Lord with three eyes, to the enemy of the three Puras.

You alone are the Lord of all worlds. You perform all acts through your own parts in the forms of Devas, by way of cause and effect.

You have engaged me in the act of protecting the universe, but you have deluded me by means of the *Māyā*. But you do not wish to eschew the defect (of *Māyā*) or even the intention (viz. my assignment of protecting the world).

What shall I do? I have placed all the burden on you, the Lord having the universe for your form. You do not wish to find fault with me for this untimely sleep. O Hara, O Śaṁbhu, remove the agony and distress of Hari." On seeing Hari's distress thus, the glorious Hara directed the expiation for Hari in this form:

21-24. "I stay on the surface of the earth in the form of Aruṇācala. Merely by visiting it, your Tamas will be destroyed.

To a previous Viṣṇu a boon had been granted by me formerly. It was at that time itself that this fiery *Liṅga* named Aruṇācala (came into being). For the purpose of protecting the worlds this effulgent form has become subdued and quiescent, since it is unmanifest and fiery as well as it has unlimited wealth of good qualities. Since it is internally fiery in form, the waters of the rivers, streams and those shed by clouds are seen merging with it.

25-26. It abides as the bestower of all *Siddhis*—such as regaining eyesight to the blind, the ability to walk oo (ooe's own) feet to the lame, begetting a son to the childless, ability to talk (fluently) to the dumb, conferment of all types of *siddhis*, dispelling all ailments and quelling of all sins."

27. After saying this, Śaṁbhu vanished. Hari came to Aruṇācala, performed penance and adored Śoṇācala.

28. After surveying the mountain all round, Hari made the Suras resort to the forests. He established the sacred hermitages

of the sages. He established the Vedas along with their ancillary subjects and Upaniṣads all round, causing them to take up physical forms.

29. He created a hundred families of celestial damsels with divine beautiful form and commanded them: "You serve (the Lord) by means of dances, songs, and instruments of music."

30. After taking his holy dip in the Brahma lake, the lotus-eyed Viṣṇu circumambulated the mountain Aruṇācala that was worshipped (by him).

31. He became free from sins and acquired the overlordship of all the worlds. He is always accompanied by Ramā who is beautiful, delightful and suitable to him.

32. On the advice of Brahmā, Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun-god) who is a mass of refulgence but who was harassed by Asuras, devoutly worshipped the Lord of Aruṇācala.

33. After plunging into the sanctifying pure *Tīrtha* created by Brahmā, he circumambulated Aruṇācala, the Lord himself.

34. After gaining victory over all the Daityas and (the privilege of) circumambulating Meru, he gained supreme refulgence that destroys the brilliance of enemies.

35. Soma (i.e. the Moon-god) overpowered by the fire of Dakṣa's curse, worshipped Aruṇācala and regained his (original) form on the strength of Śiva's words.

36. Agni (the Fire-god) was afflicted with tuberculosis on account of the curse of a Brāhmaṇa sage. Although he was impure, he became pure due to the service he rendered to Aruṇācala.

37-40. Formerly Śakra had killed Vṛtra, Bala, Pāka, Namuci and the haughty Jambha, the Daityas who had obtained boons from Śiva and become lords of the worlds. So he became exhausted due to sins and resorted to the objective of the world (viz. Śiva). He propitiated Śiva by means of penance. Directed by Śiva, he worshipped Aruṇācala. Thus the Lord of Suras became absolved of sins. He propitiated Śaṅkara by the performance of a horse-sacrifice. After attaining the position of Indra, the glorious Śakra directed a group of one hundred celestial damsels to serve (the Lord) through the service (i.e. beating) of celestial *Dundubhi*-drums.

41. After commanding the flower-clouds, he regularly wor-

ships Śoṇādri (i.e. Aruṇācala) by means of divine showers of flowers and salutes (it) from heaven.

42. At the bidding of Śiva Śeṣa worshipped the Lord of Śoṇaśaila and attained the ability of having any form he wished. He became the supporter of the globular earth.

43. Others too, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, groups of celestial damsels and Guardians of the Quarters worshipped him and obtained the expected boons.

44. Aruṇācala, the bestower of desired boons, was prayed to by all the Devas who had attempted to fight, because they were desirous of defeating Daityas and others. They prayed to the Mountain, standing all round it.

45-48a. Āditya whose shape was formed by Tvaṣṭṛ blazed with his brilliance. The Lord of Planets attempted to cross Śoṇādri. The horses of his chariot lost their power and became tired. Due to the refulgence of Śoṇādri he became devoid of glory. Even with all the (attempted) motion of the possessor of cluster of rays (i.e. Sun), he became unable to go to the heaven. On the advice of Brahmā he propitiated Aruṇācala. When the Lord was pleased, he obtained the path of the sky and splendid horses.

48b-49a. Ever since then the Sun never crosses the mountain named Śoṇa but goes circumambulating him.

49b-51a. Formerly the Devas who were either killed or became mutilated in their limbs, propitiated Aruṇācala and obtained fresh limbs. Pūṣan got back his tooth, the Fire-god his hand, Bhaga his eye and Vāṇī the unbroken nose by serving Aruṇācala.[1]

51b-53. When he obstructed the flow of water at the time of the gift of the earth by Bali (to Vāmana), Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra) lost his eye on being pricked with the tip of the *Darbha* grass held in his hand by Viṣṇu (i.e. Vāmana). He went to Śoṇācala and performed a very difficult penance. With his soul purified, he regained his eye.

He (i.e. Aruṇa—Garuḍa's brother) was stationed on the mountain named Bhāskara. By serving the Lord of Aruṇācala, he became the charioteer of the Sun-god.

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1. These gods suffered these injuries during the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice by Vīrabhadra.

54-56. A king named Pratardana[1] became eager to abduct a celestial maiden who was singing the songs of the Lord of Aruṇācala. Instantaneously he became monkey-faced. Urged by his ministers, the king returned her and gave other girls to the Aruṇa mountain. Thereupon by the grace of the Lord of Aruṇācala he became handsome in his face. On account of his devotional feelings the Lord gave him complete *Sāyujya*.

57-59. Formerly a Gandharva named Puṣpaka, weak in knowledge and devoid of devotion, went to the vicinity of the Lord of Aruṇācala. Then the attendants saw him as one with the face of a tiger. With great surprise they asked one another, "What is this?" Thereupon, when pointed out by Nārada, he realized that it was the result of his insult (to Aruṇācala). He then worshipped Aruṇācala and became handsome in his face (as before) once again.

60. The ground all round to the extent of two *Yojanas* is well-known as *Śiva-Bhūmi*. There is no destruction of the persons who die there. They get salvation.

61-63a. Formerly, the Seven Sages who had been cursed, served Aruṇācala on the earth. The glorious Lord understood their resolve and granted salvation to the noble-souled Seven Sages. The *Tīrtha* made by the Seven Sages is seen near Śoṇācala. It is auspicious, sacred and destructive of all sins.

63b-64. A certain lame sage came there in order to regain his feet through (the blessings of) Śoṇaśaila. The object of his desire was kept suppressed in his mind. He was holding two wooden spoons. Crawling eagerly on his knees, he reached the banks of the Śoṇa river.

65-69. He left the wooden spoons at the *Tīrtha* for the sake of thirsty people. While he was crawling on his knees, a certain rogue wanted to drink water. Somehow the wooden spoon reached Śoṇācala. Eager to pick up a quarrel he(?) rushed at him asking "What is this?" Suddenly he regained his feet and went back to his abode but did not see that man. The wooden spoons

1. This is a king totally different from Pratardana, a Vedic Seer of RV, a philosopher-king in Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad and the king of Kāśi, the vanquisher of Haihayas, the celebrated philanthropist of Mbh (Śānti and Anuśāsana). None of these great personages stood so low as this Pratardana of SkP.

were in front. Seeing them he took them himself and saluted Aruṇācala. Having regained his feet and handsome form the great sage became pleased. On his getting back his feet he was worshipped by the noble-souled devotees of Śiva with the eyes beaming and bulging due to surprise. He then went back the way he had come.

70. Vāli, the glorious son of Indra, attempted to go from the peak of the mountain of the rising sun to the mountain of the setting Sun.

71. He saw the Aruṇācala mountain in the middle, bowed to by Devas. (Though) he attempted to cross it, he lost his vigour and fell on the earth.[1]

72. Urged by his father who came into contact with him, he worshipped the Śoṇa mountain, the fiery *Liṅga*, and once again regained his vigour.

73. The righteous-souled Nala worshipped (Aruṇācala) formerly and protected the beloved ones of Manu created by him (i.e. men, his subjects). He was equipped with the essence of the science of ethics and politics.

74-75. Ila[2] suddenly entered the untransgressed forest of Gaurī and became a woman. He asked his priest. On being directed by Vasiṣṭha he worshipped Śoṇādri. After propitiating the Lord of Devas he regained manhood.

76-77a. Then on the advice of Soma (i.e. the Moon-god) he devoutly remembered Aruṇācala. By the blessings of Īśa, he attained redemption from the curse. He possessed increased power of penance and attained the greatest abode inaccessible even to the immortal ones.

77b-79. Since he remembered a fawn at the time of death, Bharata did not attain salvation through Yoga. He was born in the species of deer.

Hari (i.e. Rāma) had to meet with immeasurable sorrow and pain arising from the separation from his wife. On the advice of Bhṛgu he worshipped Śoṇādri. (Thereby) he dispelled all sorrows in all of his incarnations.

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1. This episode about Vālin in unknown to VR.
2. The story is based on VR VII.87-89, though Śoṇādri is not mentioned there.

80. Sarasvatī, Sāvitrī, Śrī, Bhūmi as well as the rivers worshipped the Lord of Śoṇaśaila and surmounted adversities.

81-82. The deity Bhāskara on the eastern side, Viśvāmitra on the southern side, Varuṇa on the western side and Triśūla (the trident) resorting to the north—these are stationed in the mountains as the boundaries to the extent of two *Yojanas*(?). These four deities serve the Śoṇa mountain.[1]

83. They are stationed on the edges of the borders. The four Devas bow to Śiva in the form of Śoṇācala, the Lord of the Śoṇa mountain stationed there.

84. On the northern peak of this (mountain) a certain banyan tree is seen, at the root of which stays Maheśvara perpetually in the guise of a Siddha.

85. Its shade is very extensive and is always circular in shape. It is always seen by Devas and human beings overwhelmed with surprise.

86. It shines splendidly on being served by eight *Liṅgas* all round, worshipped by the eight Guardians of the Quarters and stationed in the eight directions.

87. It was here alone that a great abode was created by the primordial Lord for the sake of the kings who are devotees of Śaṁbhu and who carry out the behests of Śaṅkara.

88. There is a great *Bakula* tree (Mimusops Elengi) there. It always bestows whatever is requested of it. At its root it is resorted to by Vāmadeva, conversant with the topics in the *Āgamas*.

89. Agastya and Vasiṣṭha worshipped Aruṇācala, installed two *Liṅgas* free from impurities and performed a similar penance.

90. Formerly the manly Śoṇanada, the son of Hiraṇyagarbha, performed a severe penance here and flowed in the direction of Gaṅgā.

91. Here flows the holy and meritorious river Śoṇa with waters free from impurities. Veṇā, the sacred river, serves the mountain all round.

92. In the quarter pertaining to the Wind-god (i.e. north-west) shines splendidly the *Vāyutīrtha*. It was here that

1. VV 81 ff. give the special features (or places worth seeing) at Aruṇācala. Most of the holy spots are met while circumambulating Aruṇācala.

formerly the Wind-god took his holy bath and attained the status of *Jagatprāṇa* ('the vital breath of the universe').

93-95. To the north of this mountain, there is a *Tīrtha* shining brilliantly with golden lotuses. It is full of the divine *Saugandhika* flowers. It is charming with swans and bees. It is the *Kaubera Tīrtha*.

In the north-east there is the excellent *Aiśānya Tīrtha* ('Holy spot pertaining to Īśāna').

To the western side of the same, the lotus-eyed Viṣṇu took his holy bath and attained the status of Viṣṇu. His features were fondled by Kamalā (goddess Lakṣmī).

96. Formerly the nine Planets took their bath there and attained the position of the Planets. Those who take their holy dip there obtain the favour of the nine Planets.

97-100. Durgā, Vināyaka, Skanda, Kṣetrapāla and Sarasvatī—these protect his *Brāhmya* (pertaining to Brahmā) *Tīrtha* all round continuously (without any break).

Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī, Sarasvatī, Narmadā, Sindhu, Kāverī. Śoṇa and Śoṛṇa river(?)—these always serve this holy spot in the different quarters beginning with the East. They lie concealed. They destroy all the sins pertaining to their respective regions.

By the favour of the Lord of Śoṇācala other rivers too, both divine and terrestrial, came up suddenly with splendid waters.

101. In the southern side a great *Tīrtha* has been spoken of, viz. *Agastya Tīrtha*. Those who take their holy bath there attain the ability to understand all languages.

102. Always in the month of Bhādrapada Agastya surrounded by groups of sages comes there, takes his holy bath and worships Śoṇādri.

103. In the northern side is the divine *Tīrtha* of splendid prosperity namely *Vāsiṣṭha*. By taking the holy bath there one attains the ability to know the meanings of all the Vedic (passages).

104. The holy lord and saint Vasiṣṭha comes there from Meru in the month of Āśvina and serves the Lord of Śoṇādri.

105. There is a great *Tīrtha* located in the north-eastern quarter named Gaṅgā. By taking holy bath there, all the sins of men are destroyed.

106. All the rivers beginning with *Gaṅgā* gather together in the month of Kārttika and respectfully serve the Lord of Aruṇādri.

107. There is a great *Tīrtha* named *Brāhmya* in the presence of the Lord of Aruṇādri. Due to the contact with it (the sins of) Brāhmaṇa-slaughter etc. are immediately dispelled.

108. In the month of Mārgaśīrṣa Brahmā comes here from his region, takes his bath everyday and worships Lord Aruṇācala.

109. In the month of Pauṣa Mahendra comes here and takes bath in the *Tīrtha* along with his Suras. He worships Śaṅkara, the Lord of Śoṇaśaila.

110. There is a great *Tīrtha* nearby named *Śaiva Tīrtha*. It was here that Rudra took his plunge along with the skull of Brahmā.

111. In the month of Māgha Śaṁbhu occupies this place along with his *Gaṇas* and is delighted. He makes all the expiatory rites of men on the earth fruitful.

112. The *Āgneya* (i.e. pertaining to Fire-god) *Tīrtha* is in the south-eastern side. It bestows Good fortune. Formerly Agni took his holy bath here and became happily united with Svāhā.

113. Smara, devoid of body, took his holy bath here in the month of Phālguna and became united (with Ratī). After worshipping the Lord of Śoṇaśaila, he became the lord of all happiness.

114. In the south-eastern quarter there is the wonderful *Vaiṣṇava Tīrtha*. Brāhmaṇa sages stay there always with great enthusiasm.

115. In the month of Caitra, Viṣṇu, the Lord of Ramā, comes there, takes his holy bath and worships the Lord of Aruṇādri. (Thus) he became the Lord of the worlds.

116. In the northern quarter there is a *Tīrtha* named *Saura Tīrtha*. By taking holy plunge there, one gets all the ailments dispelled.

117. In the month of Vaiśākha, the Sun-god takes his bath there and serves Īśa. The glorious Lord is accompanied by the Vālakhilyas and the Vedas.

118. The sacred *Tīrtha* of Āśvina is situated to the north of Īśa and Brahmā. The physicians Dasras (i.e. Aśvinīkumāras) took their holy bath and became sanctified thereby.

119-120. The Aśvins come here regularly, take their bath and worship Śaṅkara.

Near the Śoṇaśaila, to the south of it, is the splendid *Tīrtha* named *Pāṇḍava*. It bestows love and salvation. Indeed, formerly, by taking their plunge therein, the Pāṇḍavas became lords of the earth.

121. In the month of Jyeṣṭha, the Earth equipped with all medicinal herbs and fruits worships Aruṇācala along with Devas.

122. The Viśvedevas of great strength, who had been abandoned, worshipped the Lord of Śoṇaśaila in the month of Āṣāḍha and attained the worthy quality of being propitiated in the course of sacrifices.

123. The great *Tīrtha Vaiśvadeva* (i.e. pertaining to Viśvedevas) is situated to the north of the *Tīrthas* pertaining to the Moon and the Sun. By taking holy bath therein one attains the incomparable overlordship of the entire universe.

124. All round in the splendid quarter of east is seen a *Tīrtha*. Formerly Lakṣmī took her bath there and obtained the excellent Puruṣa (i.e. Viṣṇu).

125. In the northern quarter is situated the holy Skanda river. By taking his holy bath here Skanda obtained enormous strength.

126. In the western quarter is the exceedingly splendid and famous Kuṁbhanadī. Agastya, Kuṁbhaka and Kumbha are always present there.

127. Gaṅgā is stationed at the root. Yamunā is in the sky. Somodbhavā ('arising from the Moon?') is at the top. All these serve the Śoṇa mountain.

128. There are many *Tīrthas* thet have come up all round. Formerly, Mārkaṇḍeya (despite his long life) was unable to understand their difference.

129. By means of many austerities he made the Lord of Śoṇādri delighted. The lord of the sages prayed to him for a boon when he was delighted.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

130. O Lord of Aruṇādri, there are thousands of different *Tīrthas*. They are famous. They shine but are very difficult for persons with deficient mental ability to comprehend.

131. How can men get their presence in one place on the earth? It is not enough, if they are separately resorted to.

132. Your refulgence is hidden within. See to this that you are worshipped by all the Suras who are afraid of touching Śoṇādri.

133. I worshipped Śaṁbhu. I propitiated Aruṇācala by means of penance. For the sake of helping all the worlds, I worshipped the subtle *Liṅga*.

134. I mentally offered the divine aerial chariot made by Viśvakarman. It was endowed with various kinds of festivities. It caused all kinds of eternal enjoyment of pleasures.

135. Leading sages got different kinds of *Dharmaśāstras*. With great devotion, they performed all the holy rites of Śiva.

136. After worshipping Śaṁbhu, seven beautiful virgins born(?) of the *Āhutis* made in the fire were engaged for the purpose of worship.

137. The Lord of Śoṇaśaila was formerly worshipped through different offerings by kings whose hosts of enemies were killed and who regained their kingdoms.

138. Worship this excellent *Śivaliṅga* in the form of a mountain. His greatness is experienced. He is of a variegated nature. He dispels sins. He is devoid of impurities. He is the excellent Lord of Aruṇādri. His name is inaccessible(?).

139. Obtain the great (opportunity of) worshipping Aruṇācala, the blessed one, who is accustomed to protect the people who bow down, who dispels all sins merely by recollection. Obtain it through the mass of unmeasured merit.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Different Tīrthas on Aruṇācala

Pārvatī enquired:

1-2. How did this fiery *Liṅga* become approachable to all living beings on the earth? How did it become calm?

How did the *Tīrthas* issue forth from the meritorious Aruṇa mountain? Tell me, how the mountain withdrew all the limbs.

Gautama replied:

3. This mountain is fiery in the *Kṛta Yuga*; in *Tretā* it is a mountain of jewels; in *Dvāpara* it is a mountain of gold; and in *Kali* it is an emerald mountain.

4. During *Kṛta* when it stood, completely of a fiery nature, to the extent of many *Yojanas* together, the great sages performed the external circumambulation till it subsided.

5. The Lord of Aruṇādri became calm slowly. The glorious Aruṇācala when thus requested by Suras for the protection of the worlds, became completely calm.[1]

6. Then Gaurī asked the sage: "How did Aruṇācala become calm? How did Devas request the Lord of Devas ?"

7. On hearing her words thus, Gautama praised her unparalleled devotion conducive to knowing the essential thing and spoke:

Gautama said:

8. Formerly, the Suras who were incompetent to approach the fiery mountain, worshipped the Lord and eulogized him through the (prayers) originating from (i.e. included in) sacrifices:

9. "O holy Lord, O Lord of Aruṇācala who are conducive to the welfare of all the worlds, though your form is that of fire, be completely calmed down and shine on the earth.

1. This consistent traditional belief shows the possible volcanic nature of Aruṇācala in ancient times.

10. All the Vedas eulogize you, the body of Śiva, thus: 'This one who is copper-coloured or reddish-brown or tawny-coloured is highly auspicious.'[1]

11. Obeisance to the copper-coloured pink Śiva, the supreme soul,[2] to the Lord whose form can be comprehended through the Vedas, who is accompanied by Umā and whose form is happiness.

12. O Lord, this entire universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings is your form. This form of yours is seen as the receptacle of Devas.

13. You have arranged for the withdrawal of waters of the raining clouds and abundant streams at the close of *Yugas*.

14-15. The waters have originated from fire—indeed from you, the Supreme Soul. They carry on the creation of the universe on account of the wonderful richness of *Guṇas*.

O great Lord, become cool, O Śoṇācala the receptacle of mercy. O Lord, be accessible to all living beings."

16. On being eulogized thus by all the Suras who bowed down, the Lord, fond of his devotees, became cool and accessible.

17-20. Then the rivers began to function, so also the streams with plenty of water. He did not(?) take up much water of the clouds that was poured down.

Although, he had a lustre on a par with hundreds and crores of midday suns and rising world-destructive fires, he became approachable to living beings.

After letting off the waters of the universe and after filling the rivers with waters flowing out (unto them) the Lord shines for ever. There arose the different *Tīrthas* around (Aruṇācala) due to the prayers of the Guardians of the Quarters, of Suras and of the noble-souled great sages.

Brahmā said:

21. On hearing his words thus, Gaurī became curious to hear about the origin of the *Tīrthas*. She began (to enquire):

Pārvatī said:

22. Which *Tīrthas* issued forth from Śoṇādri for the pro-

1. Cf. TS 3.5.1.2a, VS 16.6a.
2. Cf. TS 4.5.8.1, VS 16.29.

tection of the worlds? O holy Lord, recount to me entirely the origin of the *Tīrthas*.

23. On hearing her words thus, he began to expound in detail the origin of the *Tīrthas*[1] as he had formerly heard from Giriśa.

Gautama said:

24. The great *Tīrtha* named *Aindra* rose up in the eastern side. By taking his bath there formerly, Śakra dispelled the sin of Brāhmaṇa slaughter.

25. The divine *Tīrtha* named *Brahmatīrtha* rose up in the south-eastern corner. By taking his bath here Vahni (the Fire-god) got rid of the sin due to the contact with other people's wives.[2]

26. A great *Tīrtha* named *Yāmya* exists in the southern side. By taking his bath here, Yama rid himself of the fear originating from Brahmā's missile.

27. The great *Tīrtha* named *Nairṛta* shines in the south-west quarter. By taking bath there, the sages attained victory over Bhūtas and Vetālas (goblins and vampires).

28. In the western side shines the *Vāruṇa Tīrtha*. By taking his bath here formerly Varuṇa got back his *Śalyakośa* ('the sheath of the lance').

29. In the north-western quarter shines the *Vāyavīya Tīrtha*. By taking his bath there Vāyu attained the exalted status of the vital breath of the universe.

30. In the northern quarter *Soma tīrtha* is remembered (i.e. said to exist). By taking his bath there formerly Soma freed himself from the ailment of tuberculosis.[3]

31. It is known that *Viṣṇu Tīrtha* is in the north-eastern

1. As stated in the last chapter, these Tirthas are on the way of circumambulation of Aruṇācala.

2. This refers to the Fire-god's attempt at illicit contacts with the wives of Saptarṣis in the episode of the birth of Skanda.

3. Soma contacted T.B. due to Dakṣa's curse. Purāṇas attribute its cure to Somanātha at Prabhāsa-paṭṭaṇa (Gujarat); that credit is claimed to Aruṇācala here as both are the forms of Śiva.

quarter. By taking his bath there formerly Viṣṇu became united with Śrī.

32-33. O goddess, formerly Mārkaṇḍeya prayed to Śaṅkara: "O great Lord, O Sadāśiva, O Lord of Devas, O Lord of the universe, by what means can there be the assembly of many *Tīrthas* in one place? O Lord Śaṅkara, kindly tell this."

34. On bearing his words thus, the Lord of Umā, the Lord of Devas, who was delighted in his mind, showed the means to the sage.

Maheśvara said:

35. Always at the time of oblation all the collection of the *Tīrthas* reach my presence and serve me in a hidden form.

36. O great sage, no other *Tīrtha* need be sought by you. At the time of the offering of oblation unto me the assembly of the *Tīrthas* is seen.

37. Hence let the gathering together of all the *Tīrthas* be seen at the end of the *Naivedya* (i.e. food offerings) always by the sages endowed with perpetual devotion and by the Suras.

38. Thus O goddess, Śaṅkara, the unmeasurable soul formerly pointed out to Mārkaṇḍeya the procedure for visiting the Tīrthas.

Gautama said:

39. All the meritorious and boly *Tīrthas* can be seen by men always at the time of oblation in the presence of Śiva.

40. Holy rites, *Tīrthas*, penance, Vedas, *Yajñas*, observances etc. and *Yogas* can be seen by visiting the Lord of Śoṇaśaila.

41. On hearing the statement of the eminent sage, the daughter of the King of Mountains became pleased. She said: "This is extremely wonderful, the group of *Tīrthas* on the earth recounted by you.

42. O foremost one among those who performed penances, I am blessed and contented by the contact with yon now. I have come to the group of the Tīrthas. Obeisance to you. Śiva too has commanded me to perform a special type of penance here.

43. How is Lord Parameśvara, Giriśa, to be worshipped here? Though he had assumed the form of a great sparkling fire, he has (now) become calm. How is he to be worshipped by groups of mortals on the earth?"

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Propitiation of Aruṇeśvara[1]

Gautama said:

1. Listen, O gentle lady, to the events that happened formerly in Kailāsa. I was asked by Śiva who wielded the Meru as his bow, to perform a pilgrimage and to see (i.e. pay a visit to) the *Liṅgas*.

2-8a. I went to various places, viz. Rudrakṣetra, Kedāra, Badarikāśrama, Kāśī in holy countries, the auspicious Śrīparvata etc. I visited the sacred cities, the chief of which is Kāñcī. I saw many self-born (i.e. natural) *Liṅgas* as well as those installed by sages, Devas, groups of learned men, Gaṇas and excellent Yogins.

O lady of great fortune and excellence, resorting to the different *Tīrthas* in the vicinity of Śiva, I wandered all over this earth along with my disciples. Thus, I visited all the *Tīrthas*, performed holy rites, penance and sacrificial rites and roamed over the earth. Always engaged in mentally reciting the name of Śiva, I bowed down to *Śivaliṅgas*. After visiting all the holy places over the earth, I resorted to this region. Here I saw three-eyed Lord Mahādeva with hair hanging down. I saw the mountain *Liṅga* well-known as Aruṇādri.

8b-11. Here the noble-souled Siddhas, the sages steadfast in their holy observances, serving Śoṇādri and taking fruits, roots and bulbous roots alone as their food, were seen by me.

I eulogized the great primordial *Liṅga* in the form of Aruṇācala which was formerly worshipped by the first Brahmā endowed with divine vision:

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1. This chapter gives the Āgamic way of Śiva worship.

"The Vedas always eulogize you, O Lord of Aruṇâcala, thus: 'He is copper-coloured, ruddy, tawny. He is very auspicious.'

Obeisance to the copper-coloured one, one of morning-like hue, ruddy, to Śiva, the Supreme Soul.

12. Obeisance to the Lord, the embodiment of all the Vedas, to the eternal one, to the Lord of immortal form. Obeisance to Kāla melting with compassion, to the ocean of nectar worthy of being drunk through the eyes.

13. Obeisance to you full of fondness for your devotees, to the sanctifying one, to the destroyer of the Puras. O Lord of the Devas, visiting you bestows the benefits of all the holy rites.

14-18a. To the persons who have obtained your vision on the earth, there is no necessity to perform any other penance anywhere. This land of Karmans (i.e. Bhārata) has been obstructed by you (to the Devas). Devas themselves seek a residence here under your refuge. The fruit resulting from grasping the opportune time (?) has been obtained by me today. Whatever other penance has been performed by me is entirely the fruit of visiting you. O Lord of Devas, your form is wonderfully prosperous. Nowhere in the world a *Liṅga* in the form of a mountain have I seen on the earth.

O Lord of Devas, having three forms, your great body is seen as very charming with the three angular points united with the Sun, the Fire and the Moon (which are regarded as your eyes). (*obscure*)

18b-25a. Your wonderful *Liṅga* has been seen—the *Liṅga* that causes the three *Kālas* (i.e. Times, viz. Past, Present and Future) with the forms of the three *Śaktis*, which is of the nature of the three Vedas, and which has three angles as its parts. (*obscure*)

The Lord well-known as Śoṇâdri is seen on the terrestrial region. He has assumed an extended form for the sake of protecting the three worlds.

Even if ignorant people merely have a view of him, he distributes all kinds of enjoyment among them, as he is a storehouse of sincere, unpretended mercifulness.

There is another *Liṅga* without worship. It is said to be *Śūnya* ('void'). It is worshipped by Devas. It always bestows all boons.

Be pleased, O Śoṇācala, full of mercy; O Maheśvara, protect me. I am afraid of (this) worldly existence.

I sought asylum in you, O Lord, (as) you are affectionate to your devotees. Your wonderful and great form that is pleasing to the sight, has been seen.

Make me blessed, O ocean of mercy. I seek refuge in you who are worthy of being sought asylum in, O Lord."

On being eulogized by me the Lord of Śoṇācala showed me the great divine form and said to me:

25b-30a. "I am much delighted with your eulogies and great devotion. Let your perpetual residence be here near me. Worship me always with the eternal offerings and enjoyments (available) on the earth. Perform austerities and show to everyone the greatness of this place. Formerly as you were residing on the peak of Kailāsa endowed with power of penance, I directed you to worship me on the Śoṇādri in the terrestrial region.

It is the form of my worship followed by the Seven Sages that shines in heaven. As you are superior (to others) by your penance, demonstrate similar (type of) respectful worship on the surface of the earth for the welfare of all beings. (*obscure*)

30b-34a. Worship me with great respect on the earth following the modes of worship prescribed in the *Āgamas*.

The divine form of my great worship can be seen in heaven by Devas. The terrestrial form (of worship) should be revealed and extended by you on the surface of the earth.

The greatness of my Aruṇācala form on the terrestrial region has already been described. I am much delighted with you. You are superior to those meritorious persons who worshipped me formerly. You reveal the mode of worship of Śiva on the earth."

On being commanded thus, I bowed down to the Lord of Devas with great devotion to Bhava (i.e. Śiva). Paying obeisance to the Lord of Aruṇādri, I (respectfully) asked the Lord full of mercy:

34b-37a. "This fiery form is unapproachable. How can I worship this Maheśvara through the materials of worship befitting the mortal world? How can I literally carry out this behest? Suggest the means, O glorious Lord, whereby Your Lordship may be approachable."

On being petitioned thus, the glorious Lord, the Lord of

Śoṇācala, the immanent soul of everyone, the storehouse of mercy, blessed me as I bowed down:

37b-41. "I shall reveal the subtle *Liṅgas* on the surface of the earth. Offer me the requisite worship through the different types of holy rites prescribed in the *Āgamas*. Worship my subtle wonderful *Liṅga* endowed with the five sheaths, named *Aruṇādrīśa*. Worship it by means of the power of your penance."

After commanding thus, the self-born Śiva, the great Lord, showed me his form of the nature of subtle *Liṅga*, devoid of impurities.

On seeing that subtle *Liṅga* devoid of impurities, the *Liṅga* that rose up by itself and which is enveloped by all the coverings, I became contented in my heart. Once again I submitted to Lord Śaṃbhu who is affectionate to those who resort to him:

42-47a. "It has come to this that the different types mentioned in the *Āgamas* cannot be seen directly. How can I know the different names of your forms that have become separated, O Lord of benign form, O my Lord? Who shall be your worshipping (priests)? Of what type is the temple? How are you to be eulogized? What is the procedure of the worship? Who are the attendants here? How should the region be protected? Who are your personal guards? How shall your human type of perpetual worship flourish? How can this be believed by men that many Devas have come? Be pleased, O great Īśāna. Command everything yourself."

On being appealed thus the Lord of Śoṇādri himself commanded Viśvakarman who came (there):

47b-49. "You create a divine city named Aruṇa. Create also a divine temple of mine that shall be superior in qualities and brilliant with a number of great jewels. Make arrangements for all the ancillary things for the worship, such as the three types of musical instruments etc."

The glorious Śiva mentioned the different names and the procedures of worship. Śiva, the embodiment of mercy and Lord of Aruṇācala, proclaimed *Vratas* (i.e. vows and observances) also.

50-52. Listen from me about the attendants who have been created for the sake of worship:

"O Gautama, listen from me to the entire procedure of wor-

ship in the way of mortals. It is popular all over the world, for the sake of the welfare of all the worlds.

This incomparable, great fiery *Liṅga* named Aruṇādriśvara is seen (in front of you). Let it be worshipped by you regularly.

Śakti, of perpetual rise and prosperity, who (resides) on the northern side of mine, should be joyously worshipped.

53. Her name is *Apītakucā* ('one whose breast has not been sucked'). The greatness of her abode (is noteworthy). This Lord of Aruṇācala is inseparably accompanied by his beloved.

54. For the sake of festivities, Mahādeva should be worshipped, accompanied by Agasutā ('daughter of the mountain'). Śiva is the bestower of enlightenment on the devotees. With the gesture of his hands, he offers freedom from fear.

55. He holds a deer and an axe in his hands. His face is always beaming with smile. Śaṁbhu, the Lord of Umā and Skanda, has divine jewels and gems as his ornaments.

56-57. With his refulgence he brightens all the worlds. He is endowed with unimpeded glory. In the auspicious festival of Śakti, Sundareśvarī should be worshipped. She shall be bedecked in all ornaments increasing the sentiment of love.

At the outset, the boy Gaṇapati, the delighter of prosperity should be worshipped.

58-60. Gaṇapati shall grace the place near me. He shall be worshipped with the food offerings (of various types) conducive to great prosperity.

Let the supreme Śakti be worshipped as stationed near me. She never leaves off my side. There is a red line beautifying her eyes. Let her be worshipped for the sake of festivities.

For the sake of festivities, Amṛteśvara ('Lord of Nectar') shall be worshipped at the tip of the eye. He is glorious. He is an expert in the *Tāṇḍava* (i.e. the violent dance of Śiva), with his feet sounding resonantly.

Another Śakti of great fortune, namely Bhūvināyakā shall also be worshipped.

61. At the entrance, Nandin and Mahākāla resembling the Sun (shall be worshipped). Let there be the arrangement for the worship of all my devotees.

62. The Mothers should be worshipped on the southern side

along with *Vighnaśāstṛ* ('the chastiser of obstacles'). In the south-west, Vināyaka, the destroyer of obstacles, shall be worshipped.

63. Let Skanda holding the Śakti be worshipped in the north-east corner. Thereafter the charming *Liṅgas* should be worshipped.

64-68. After worshipping in my temple, Dakṣiṇāmūrti (shall be worshipped) in the southern side. The idol in the west shall be the idol of the form of the Fire-god. In the north the idol of the form of Brahmā (shall be adored). In the east the idol with the deer and the earth (shall be worshipped). It shall have the qualities of all the Devas and shall be endowed with all Śaktis (powers). Then (the devotee shall worship) in the temple of goddess Apitakucā. It shall have (the installation of) all the Śaktis, surrounded by the wives of the Guardians of the Quarters. For the protection of the temple, one shall worship the goddesses Vaibhavanāyikās. After worshipping the Kṣetrapāla endowed with all the *Āvaraṇas* (coverings), Aruṇagiriśvarī who comes to protect her son, shall be worshipped.

69. Kāli and other deities and goddesses of many kinds, such as Vidhipālakas (shall be worshipped). Every month arrangements should be made for celebrating different kinds of festivals with great display.

70. Create girls of divine forms engaged in the worship of Lord Śiva. They shall be conversant with the arts of dancing and singing. They shall be endowed with beauty of form and good fortune.

71-75. They must possess beautiful graces and charms. They shall be the bestowers of love and ever-pure and sacred.

For doing divine services command your disciples who are conversant with the Vedas and are brilliant due to their good conduct. They shall be amiable and well-behaved with pure minds. They should have had the (*Śaiva*) initiation. They shall be experts in the *Āgamas* pertaining to Śiva. They shall be clean and free from impurities.

For the popularization of the cult and conventions of *Śaiva* philosophy, command them to worship me.

Create persons who play on drums, who blow conchs, who play on the lute, cymbals and flutes. Create coppersmiths, people

of good learning, experts in the four lores, different kinds of Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras approved of hy Śiva.

In the four quarters, four *Maṭhas* ('monasteries') should be erected for the sake of the pilgrims and those who live in the holy apots as well as for the residence of sages and devotees of Śiva who have renounced (worldly) desires.

76-80. May the eminent sages staying in them protect the system of the worship of Śiva. The devotees of Śiva and the *Pāśupatas* shall beg for alms (for their sustenance). Let these and the others of Yogic power and practice, as well as the *Kāpālikas* always protect this holy spot. All the kings of the past, present and future shall protect this spot without any disobedience to their commands.

Here is seen a great divine tree, the *Bakula* (Mimusops Elengi). Let the devotees discuss and come to a conclusion in regard to the rites of Śiva here (under the tree).

Whatever monetary gift is offered here unto me for the acquisition of the other world not yet seen, shall yield everlasting benefit. That should be protected by the servants and followers of Śiva. I shall listen to the matter submitted hy the devotees standing in front.

81. I shall get everything (procured) in accordance with their mental desire. I shall forgive thousands of the offences of those who worship me well.

82. Since this worship formulated as a human activity is mentioned in the *Āgamas*, I shall accept the entire worship mentioned in all the *Āgamas*.

83-85. The holy rites and activities of my followers and devotees shall be pleasing to me. Even what they resolve within themselves is pleasing to me. O sage, go through all the *Āgama* topics; make different kinds of procedures of worship suitable to the occasion for protecting the worlds.

On the full-moon day a great worship shall be respectfully performed. Thousands of different kinds of *Satras* ('sacrifices') should be performed here. In the presence of thia (*Liṅga*) different kinds of charitahle gifts shall be made.

86. Those who offer inextinguishable lamps in my presence shall undoubtedly attain this brilliant fiery form.

87. Those who devoutly offer flowers growing in water, on trees, climbing plants and creepers to me shall become kings.

88-90. I shall myself be in front of them and defeat their enemies. The king who is superior in penance in any country will be given a better and more prosperous rebirth by me. After approaching (me) even the wicked-minded kings will undoubtedly become perfect devotees of Śiva."

91. On hearing these words coming out of the mouth of Śambhu, I got rid of all my sins. I bowed down to Śiva, the Lord of the mountain Śoṇācala, and submitted eagerly.

CHAPTER NINE

The Efficacy of the Circumambulation of Aruṇeśvara

Gautama said:

1. O Lord, O Lord of Aruṇācala, I wish to hear in particular your names in this holy spot worshipped by Suras.

Maheśvara said:

2. O holy sage, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, listen to the most important of my names. They are difficult to be known by persons of very little merit. On the earth they always bestow the desired objects:

3-15. The names are:

Śoṇādrīśa ('Lord of the red mountain'), *Aruṇādrīśa*, *Devādhīśa* ('Overlord of Devas'), *Janapriya* ('Popular with or fond of the people'), *Prapannarakṣaka* ('Protector of those who resort to him devoutly'), *Dhīra* ('Bold'), *Śiva-sevaka-vardhaka* ('One who increases the prosperity of a servant of Śiva'), *Akṣipeyāmṛta* ('One who is a nectar to be drunk through the eyes'), *Īśāna* ('Lord') *Strī-puṁ-bhāva-pradāyaka* ('One who grants the form of a male and a female'), *Bhakta-vijñapti-sandhātā* ('One who grants the submission of the devotees'), *Dīna-bandī-vimocana* ('One who releases a distressed prisoner'), *Mukharāṅghripati* ('Lord whose

feet sound resonantly'), *Śrīmān* ('Glorious'), *Mṛḍa* ('Compassionate'), *Mṛgamadeśvara* ('Lord of Musk'), *Bhaktaprekṣaṇakṛt* ('One who glances at or looks after the devotees'), *Sākṣin* ('Witness'), *Bhaktadoṣanivartaka* ('One who dispels the defects of the devotees'), *Jñānasaṁbandhanātha* ('Lord who blessed the saint Jñānasambandha'[1]), *Śrīhalāhalasuṁdaka* ('One who swallowed the poison Halāhala'), *Āhavalīśvaryadātā* ('One who bestows glory in war'), *Smartṛsarvāghanāśana* ('Destroyer of all the sins of those who remember him'), *Vyatyastanṛtyadhvajadhṛk* ('One who holds the banner while dancing in reverse'), *Sakānti* ('Highly lustrous'), *Naṭaneśvara* ('Lord of dance'), *Sāmapriya* ('One who is fond of the Sāman hymns'), *Kalidhvaṁsī* ('One who destroys *Kali*'), *Vedamūrti* ('Embodiment of the Vedas'), *Nirañjana* ('Unsullied one'), *Jagannātha* ('Lord of the universe'), *Mahādeva* ('Great god'), *Trinetra* ('Three-eyed'), *Tripurāntaka* ('Destroyer of the three Puras'), *Bhaktāparādhasoḍhā* ('One who bears with the offences of devotees'), *Yogīśa* ('Lord of Yogins'), *Bhoganāyaka* ('Lord of enjoyment of pleasures'), *Bālamūrti* ('One who assumed the form of a boy), *Kṣamārūpī* ('One who is forgiveness incarnate'), *Dharmarakṣa* ('Defender of *dharma*'), *Vṛṣadhvaja* ('Bull-emblemed'), *Hara* ('One who dispels sins'), *Girīśvara* ('Lord of the mountain'), *Bharga* ('Highly effulgent'), *Candrarekhāvataṁsaka* ('One with the digit of the Moon as an ornament'), *Smarāntaka* ('Slayer of the god of Love'), *Andhakaripu* ('Enemy of the demon Andhaka'), *Siddharāja* ('King of Siddhas'), *Digaṁbara* ('Naked'), *Āgamapriya* ('Fond of the *Āgamas*'), *Īśāna* ('Lord'), *Bhasmarudrākṣalāñchana* ('One characterized by the sacred ash and the *Rudrākṣa* bead'), *Śrīpati* ('Lord of wealth and splendour'), *Śaṅkara* ('Benefactor'), *Sraṣṭā* ('Creator'), *Sarvavidyeśvara* ('Lord of all lores'), *Anagha* ('Sinless'), *Gaṅgādhara* ('One who holds Gaṅgā'), *Kratudhvaṁsī* ('One who destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa'), *Vimala* ('Devoid of impurities'), *Nāgabhūṣana* ('Having serpents for ornaments'), *Aruṇa* ('Red one'), *Bahurūpa* ('Multi-formed'), *Virūpākṣa* ('One with uneven three eyes'), *Akṣarākṛti* ('One of imperishable form'), *Anādi* ('Beginningless'), *Antarahita* ('Devoid of end'), *Śivakāma* ('One who wishes for welfare'), *Svayaṁprabhu*

1. Name of a Tamil Saint.

('Master of oneself'), *Saccidānandarūpa* ('Embodiment of existence, knowledge and bliss'), *Sarvātmā* ('Soul of all'), *Jīvadhāraka* ('Sustainer of lives'), *Strīsaṅgavāmasubhaga* ('One who is graceful and charming with the contact of a lady, Pārvatī, on his left side'), *Vidhi* ('Ordainer'), *Vihitasundara* ('One who created a beautiful form'), *Jñānaprada* ('One who bestows knowledge'), *Muktida* ('One who bestows salvation'), *Bhaktavāñchitadāyaka* ('Bestower of what is desired by the devotees'), *Āścaryavaibhava* ('One of wonderful magnificence'), *Kāmī* ('Lover'), *Niravadya* ('Blameless'), *Nidhīprada* ('Bestower of treasure'), *Śūlī* ('Trident-bearer'), *Paśupatī* ('Lord of the animals or the individual souls'), *Śaṁbhu* ('One who bestows welfare'), *Svayaṁbhū* ('Self-born'), *Girīśa* ('One who lives on a mountain'), and *Mṛḍa* ('Compassionate'). These are my important names here, O great sage.

16. Remember the other divine names too mentioned in the Purāṇas. Particularly worship me regularly with circumambulation.

17. Since I am fond of circumambulation (pay particular attention to me) in the form of Śoṇācala.

On being ordered thus, O daughter of the Mountain, I continued so stay in this place without leaving. I continued to worship Mahādeva (in the form of) Aruṇācala.

Gaurī said:

18. O holy lord Gautama, O noble leader of sages conversant with all holy rites, tell me the importance of the circumambulation of the Śoṇa mountain.

19. At what time should it be done? How should it be done? Who are those persons by whom circumambulation of the Lord of Śoṇādri was performed formerly and the desired excellent position had been obtained?

Brahmā said:

20. On being asked thus, sage Gautama said to the daughter of the mountain:

Gautama said:

O goddess, let the importance which Maheśvara told me, be heard.[1]

Mahādeva said:

21-26. I have manifested myself and I shine on the surface of the earth in the form of Śoṇaśaila. There are Suras along with sages all round me. Whatever sins have been committed in previous births, perish at every step of the circumambulation. The benefits of thousands of horse-sacrifices and of (visiting) all the holy spots are achieved at every step of circumambulation.

If he circumambulates the Moon-crested Lord and goes ahead, which man does not achieve spiritual perfection even if he is devoid of all good qualities, does not perform holy rites and is of very low birth?

27. It is true that the merit that one gets in making pilgrimage to all the *Tīrthas*, the virtue accrued from (performing) all *Yajñas* and (obeying) *Āgamas*, is achieved by means of the circumambulation of Śoṇa mountain. It is true.

28. The sins committed by the mind are destroyed by the first step, the sins committed in speech by the second and the sins perpetrated by the body by the third step of the men.

29. One shall wipe off all sins by means of one step and acquire (the merits of) all types of penance by means of the second step of circumambulation.

30. There are thousands of the hermitages of great sages and Siddhas and thousands of the abodes of Suras here.

31. I reside here like a Siddha always worshipped by Suras. Within me should be meditated a cave of divine features endowed with means of enjoyment of pleasures.

32. The devotee should meditate upon the form of the nature of a fiery pillar. He should meditate upon the *Liṅga* well-known as Aruṇādri. Meditating upon this huge *Liṅga*, the devotee should circumambulate slowly.

33. Meditating duly upon this fiery *Liṅga* having eight forms and circumambulating it (the devotee) shall burn his sins.

1. VV 21 ff. deal with the meritoriousness of circumambulating the mountain Aruṇācala and its procedure.

34. If anyone regularly circumambulates the Lord in the form of Śoṇācala, he has no rebirth. He shall certainly attain eternity.

35. If a person takes even a step by way of circumambulation, the entire earth is sanctified by coming into contact with the dust of his feet.

36. With palms joined in reverence he should make obeisance in every direction. He should then meditate and eulogize. He should circumambulate slowly without his hand touching anyone else.

37. Without any agitation, without even hearing the sound of his own steps, the devotee should circumambulate in the manner a woman walks when delivery is imminent.

38. The learned devotee should put on a clean dress after bath. He should apply sacred ash over his body and adorn himself with *Rudrākṣa* beads. Remembering Śiva he should take steps slowly.

39-40. He should think about the likelihood of collision with thousands of Devas, invisible Siddhas and others of gaseous forms as well as Manus who walk ahead. He must think about the consequent rush and obstruction to the path. He should be a true devotee and go ahead slowly putting down his steps along the path.

41. Or the devotee should circumambulate along with other devotees chanting the names of Śiva, singing excellent songs and dancing like Śiva.

42. Or he should, with his mind not dwelling on anything else, listen respectfully to my greatness and circumambulate slowly feeling the thrill of the bliss.

43. He must offer different kinds of charitable gifts. He must perform meritorious deeds. He should render assistance to suppliants. He should be pious and merciful in a manner he thinks best. Thus he should move round.

44. In *Kṛtayuga* the *Liṅga* is fiery. In *Tretā* it is a jewel mountain. In *Dvāpara* one should think about it as golden and in *Kaliyuga* it is an emerald mountain.

45. Or he can meditate upon the red crystalline form that is self-luminous. Meditating thus, he will be freed from all sins. He shall go to the city of Śiva.

46-50a. This *Liṅga* with the name of Aruṇācala is the greatest on account of its inscrutability resulting from its state of not being an object of speech and mind and also because of its fiery nature. It is unapproachable. But I become approachable immediately to the person who circumambulates after meditation.

If a person bolds at least one form (?) in the course of the circumambulation of the Lord of Śoṇācala, the dust of his feet becomes the cause of unaging immortality.

The vehicles of the groups of Suras vie with one another to bear the feet of those who circumambulate Aruṇācala.

The trees of Suras beginning with *Kalpaka* offer shade to those men who circumambulate Aruṇācala on the earth.

50b-54a. Hundreds and crores of aerial chariots filled with the Gaṇas (i.e. Śiva's attendants) and surrounded by thousands of Devas, Gandharvas and others serve them.

The great path leading to Śiva's region is seen sanctified by the dust-particles of the feet of those who circumambulate me on the earth.

One who performs *Aṅgapradakṣiṇā* (i.e. going round by rolling) shall have a heavenly body instantaneously. He shall attain adamantine body. No one will dare to challenge him on the surface of the earth.

Devas eagerly moving about in their aerial chariots, Siddhas and great sages roam about in this place in invisible forms and they visit my presence.

54b-57a. On seeing their humility, devotion to me, circumambulation and ardour, they become delighted and grant boons unto men.

Formerly thirty-three Devas circumambulated everyday seating themselves on the way. Each of them became a crore.

All the Planets beginning with the Sun, circumambulated and all of them became the rulers of Planets (*grahapati*?) over the whole of the universe.

57b-64a. One who circumambulates on Sunday becomes liberated.[1] Piercing through the solar disc, he shall go to Śiva's city.

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1. VV 57b-64a detail the fruit of circumambulating Śoṇācala on different days of the week.

The man who circumambulates Aruṇādri on Monday attains immunity from old age and death. He never becomes rough or cruel (*asaumya*) on the earth.

The man who circumambulates Aruṇādri on Tuesday becomes free from all indebtedness. He shall certainly become an Emperor.

The man who circumambulates the Lord of Aruṇādri on Wednesday shall attain omniscience and become lord of eloquence.

The man who circumambulates Śoṇādri on Thursday shall be bowed to by all the Devas. He shall be the preceptor of the worlds.

The man who circumambulates Aruṇādri on Friday shall attain great fortune and thereafter the region of Viṣṇu.

The man who circumambulates the Lord of Śoṇādri on Saturday shall be rid of the tortures caused by evil spirits and adverse Planets and becomes the conqueror of the entire universe.

64b-68a. All the stars along with their presiding deities shall become propitious immediately to the person who circumambulates me.

The *Tithis* ('Lunar days'), *Karaṇas* and *Yogas* (i.e. peculiar combinations of stars and the Moon) approved of by me shall be the bestowers of the desired benefits on those who circumambulate me.

The different kinds of *Muhūrtas* and *Horās* (i.e. periods of astrological importance) shall be gentle and conducive to perpetual prosperity of those who circumambulate me. They shall be auspicious always.

In the word *Pra-Da-Kṣi-Ṇā*[1] the syllable *Pra* dispels sin, the syllable *Da* bestows what is desired, the syllable *Kṣi* causes the destruction of *Karman* and the syllable *Ṇā* is the bestower of salvation.

68b-71a. Feeble persons, emaciated ones, persons with excess of mental and physical ailments become liberated from all sins by circumambulating me.

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1. A folk etymology only.

I see that the circumambulation of the three worlds in an instant can be performed through the devotion of one who circumambulates me regularly.

The lords of the worlds, the lords of the quarters and other lords of causes became established in their (respective) realm formerly by circumambulating me.

71b-74a. At the time of *Uttarāyaṇa* ('Northern transit of the Sun') I too circumambulate myself accompanied by the Gaṇas and all the celestial sages.

For the sake of the welfare of the three worlds I perform the circumambulation of my own form, the fiery *Liṅga*, well-known as Aruṇādri.

At the end of the *Para* (i.e. Brahmā's life-time) Gaurī will be coming here to perform a wonderful penance. By circumambulating me the sinless lady will come back to me.

74b-75a. In the month of Kārttika, on the day when the constellation Kṛttikā appears Gaurī of great penance will circumambulate me at the time of dusk.

75b-78a. That circumambulation of that fiery *Liṅga* seen on account of the request of the goddess, is very difficult of access to men of meagre merit.

That goddess named Apītakucā accompanied by me shall attain it and console all the Suras at the time of *Uttarāyaṇa*.

Devas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Siddhas, Rākṣasas and all those of divine species shall gather there.

78b-83. Those who are superior in penance, come there and worship me, will have expiated for the multitudes of sins committed in the course of all their births.

That day, during *Uttarāyaṇa*, is very rare unto men. Let the men become blessed by worshipping my form then.

If kings perform the divine rite of circumambulating me, I shall stand ahead of them myself and conquer their enemies.

If the king of any land, should he be superior in the performance of penance, makes leading Brāhmaṇas well-versed in Vedic lore circumambulate me on his behalf for a period of forty days or half that time in accordance with the injunctions and also along with the rite of *Saṅkalpa* (i.e. formal rite of resolving to perform any holy rite), I shall make his land firmly established. I

shall defeat his enemies, O sage. I shall myself be standing ahead in this matter.

84. One who is earnestly desirous of merit should never circumambulate me by means of a vehicle. He should know fully well the transgression of the *Śaiva* cult involved therein.[1]

85. Formerly, the king Dharmaketu who returned from the world of Yama, desired to circumambulate me by means of (i.e. riding) a horse.

86. Instantly the horse became the lord of Gaṇas and was adored by Suras. The horse then left off the king and attained the region of Śiva.

87. On seeing his vehicle in the guise of the lord of the Gaṇas, (the king) performed the rite of circumambulation on foot and he himself became the lord of Gaṇas.

88. Ever since then Suras beginning with Śakra accompanied by Viṣṇu perform the rite of circumambulating me only on foot.

89. A certain Siddha who was thrown out of heaven at the (proper) time due to the exhaustion of the power of penance, circumambulated me and regained his original region.

90. If blood were to flow from the foot of one who circumambulates me, it is wiped off by the filaments of the *Mandāra* flowers from the crown of Devendra.

91. When the foot of the man who circumambulates me hits against the rocky pebbles in the highway of circumambulation, it is mollified by the saffron powder from the breasts of Śrī (i.e. goddess of prosperity).

92. By circumambulating me men will always wander on the peaks of the Maṇiparvata in the midst of the grove of *Kalpa* trees.

Gaurī said:

93. O sage of holy rites, recount to me the benefit of those people who engage themselves in various services (of the deity),

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1. The circumambulation consists of 30 kms but no vehicle is to be used. *Vide infra* the story of King Vajrāṅgada—Uttarārdha Chs. 22-24. It (the circumambulation) must be covered on foot.

the services whereby people will become blessed after displaying their reverence and eagerness in accordance with their ability.

The sage said:

94. O goddess, listen. I shall recount the benefit of services to you.[1] Parameśvara had formerly described this to me out of mercy:

95. "A certain she-spider spun a cobweb of threads in some place (around) me. It became another being who could remember the previous births. It came to this mountain and covered me with silk cloths.

96. A certain thirsty elephant spilt honey (on me) in a certain place. He uprooted forest sprouts. Thus he became liberated and was transformed into the lord of Gaṇas.

97. The worms rolling near me become free from sins. In the guise of Siddhas they go over to my world.

98. He who places the wick of a lamp that is not put out even for a moment becomes self-luminous and attains *Sārūpya* (i.e. having the same form as of Śiva) with me.

99. A certain glowworm of green colour came and had his nest in a branch near me. Since his glow served as a lamp during the night he attained salvation.

100. Cows yielding streams of milk on remembering their calves (while) standing at my side attained salvation and they resorted to my world.

101. A certain crow was eager to seize the oblation. It fluttered its wings and the wind arising therefrom swept the place in front of me. Instantly he attained liberation.

102. A certain mouse dragged a cluster of jewels into my sanctum sanctorum and made it free from darkness by brightening it. He attained my form.

103. Sages, Devas etc. pray that they should be shady trees at my side, because they desire never to be born again.

104. Riches and desired objects are achieved by those who make ornamental gateways, towers and minarets, assembly halls, platforms and tanks in my front.

1. VV 94-102 give instances of how non-human beings received benefit by their service rendered unknowingly to Śiva.

105. This fiery *Liṅga* of mine is always unapproachable to human beings. It is called *Anāsādyācaleśa* ('the god of an inaccessible mountain'). Let it be worshipped on the surface of the earth.

106. The *Parāśakti* named *Apītakucā* who nourishes the entire universe that has become her own by means of glances, touches and meditations, should be worshipped.

107. The sole mother of all the worlds who is named *Apītakucā*, who has attained eternal youth, should always be served by those who seek freshness of youth.

108. To the living beings that stay even for a moment in front of her, there is no desired object here or hereafter that cannot be attained.

109. Worship the Lord of Śoṇādri, the supporting basis of immeasurable good qualities, the bestower of expected boons and the abode of all enjoyment of pleasures."

110. O lady of good holy rites, after realizing your desired object you will resort to Śaṁbhu once again. This performance of penance by you shall be conducive to the welfare of all the worlds.

111. Your penance is not only the bestower of the benefit desired by you but also it is conducive to the welfare of the sages who perform penance.

112. Suspecting (? thinking of) another cause, the deities perform penance. The secret of the deities can be inferred only through the result. *(obscure)*

113. We shall stay with you, O goddess of Devas. Let us be contented and blessed by observing your holy rites. It is only through penance that we attain contentment and blessedness.

114. On hearing these words pregnant with meaning, of that sage, Gaurī became endued with eagerness. She praised the great sage.

115. What other penance has to be performed? Your vision has been obtained. This Aruṇācala is seen and his greatness has been heard.

116. How wonderful is the peculiarity of the earth that it is seen as superior to heaven! It is here that there is the fiery *Liṅga*, the bestower of boons on the deities.

117. The favour of Śiva has been won by me. His own abode has been pointed out to me. I shall propitiate Śiva here itself and win over the preceptor of the universe.

118. Let there be my inseparable unity with the Lord for ever. With the help rendered by you, I shall become the beloved of Śiva.

119. Thus the Goddess took a vow in the presence of Gautama to perform the penance with great respect. With great devotion she was allowed to do so by the sage saying "So be it". She resorted to a beautiful hut of leaves and twigs.

120. The Daughter of the Mountain, of a delicate body with eyes like lotus, placed an upper (bark) garment over her thickest protruding breasts and wore matted hair. She who had the lustre of sapphire gem shone like the glory of penance in an embodied form.

121. By means of many holy observances, by various kinds of special austerities, by means of various wonderful yogic feats obtained in the course of the sacrifice. She did full justice unto tha entire pathway of virtue revealed by *Nigamas* and *Āgamas*.

122. The Slender Lady never had any sort of fatigue at any time while performing the different kinds of penance. The Young Maiden became an indescribable sapphire-set tender creeper full of brilliant lustre.

CHAPTER TEN

The Fight with Mahiṣāsura[1]

Brahmā said:

1. Then oppressed by the demon Mahiṣa, Devas left the earth. Being distressed they bowed down to Gaurī who was performing penance and sought refuge in her.

1. The chapter describes how the demon Mahiṣāsura was attracted to the goddess Pārvatī due to her beauty and how he was discomfited by her. He was lured through Bṛhaspati and led to meet his fatal end.

2. On seeing those terribly frightened Immortal Ones, praying, "O Goddess, grant freedom from fear", that Goddess asked them, "What is the matter?"

3. Thereupon, with palms joined in reverence, Devas with Indra as their leader, submitted to the Goddess the terror from the leading Daitya to which they were subjected.

Devas said:

4-6. (The Asura) joyously plays in the Nandana park surrounded by celestial damsels. For the sake of sport and pastime, he keeps all the elephants of the quarters, the leader of whom is Airāvata, who have come to his abode along with their mates. He enjoys the vehicles, the chief of whom is Uccaiḥśravas. In his beautiful stables lakhs and crores (of horses) are seen. He wishes to acquire the ram, the vehicle of Fire-god, for his son to ride.

7. He brought the buffalo of Yama and yoked it to (his own) cart. He dragged all the Siddhis and engaged them in his domestic chores.

8-11. He brought the entire group of celestial damsels for his personal service. If there is anything else of great value in the three worlds which has not been acquired, he becomes furious and does not rest till he has brought it.

We have become his servants tormented with perpetual fear. We adore him. We obey his commands. We do not find any other option to take. It has been said that the protection of those who seek refuge is the fruit of austerities.

This Daitya is invincible. He is the most excellent one among powerful persons. He cannot be conquered by Suras or Daityas, because he has been granted boons of prosperity by Śiva.

12. The Ocean, when struck by his horns, says, "I give up" and offers him gems and jewels as present. Thereby the Ocean wishes to seek his favour.

13. This exceedingly haughty demon lifts mountains by means of the tips of his horns, throws them up and plays smearing himself with the finely powdered minerals.

14. His incomparable strength cannot be crushed. He is unassailable unto others. You understand it yourself after striking him with your own brilliance and prowess.

15. This is the great Śakti of Śaṁbhu visible in the form of a woman. He has obtained boons from Śiva. He should be killed by you alone.

16. O Goddess, we do not know anything about the working of Śaṁbhu. Only we should always be protected by you, Mother of the universe.

17. On hearing these appropriate words of (Suras) who had been extremely frightened, the Goddess became kindly disposed in her mind. Granting them freedom from fear, she spoke to them then:

18. "O Immortal Ones, the protection of those who seek refuge in me should be carried out by me, even as I am engaged in a penance. The enemy will become feeble and exhausted due to Kāla (i.e. in due course).

19. I will drag the great Asura by clever means and kill him. It is not proper on my part to kill a sinless one who has not committed any offence today.

20-21. Indeed those who transgress virtue and piety will become (i.e. suffer the fate of) moths in the fire of Dharma."

On hearing her words Devas bowed down to the Daughter of the Mountain and went back the way they had come. All of them were rid of their fear and they became delighted in their minds.

22. When Devas had departed the lotus-eyed Gaurī became a fascinating Śakti (i.e. enchantress) endowed with splendour and concealed belly.

23. That Goddess established four excellent Baṭukas on four mountains in the four quarters of Aruṇācala for the sake of protection.

24. When the Daughter of the Mountain came from the peak of Kailāsa, the four Mothers had followed her in order to serve her.

25. Four lady attendants had followed her, viz. Dundubhi, Satyavatī, Anavamī and Sundarī.

26. "Let in only a guest overwhelmed with hunger and thirst on a visit to this Aruṇācala and no one else." So she instructed them.

27. After giving directions to those heroic powerful (Baṭu-

kas) stationed on the bordering mountains, the Daughter of the Mountain performed penance in the vicinity of the hermitage of Gautama.

28. While that slender-bodied lady was engaged in penance, there was no type of distress at all. The clouds showered timely rains and the trees became fruitful.

29. The animals antagonistic to one another by nature gave up their previous animosity. That hermitage dispelled all fears and became worthy of being sought refuge in.

30. That part of Aruṇācala extending to two *Yojanas* (i.e. 24 kms) was guarded by those four brave Baṭukas stationed on the mountains over the boundary.

31. No cause of fear rose up. Nothing striking terror was observed. No one was afflicted with sickness. Neither external enemies nor internal enemies (like lust and wrath) prevailed there.

32. All the sages became contented and felt relieved. They praised the Daughter of the Mountain. Some praised that hermitage as the (veritable) region of Śiva's world.

33. By day and night, Gaurī continued to perform severe penance causing satisfaction to Śiva. But the young maiden was not fully satisfied.

34. Mahiṣa of great power and vigour intended to go ahunting. He wandered over the entire forest away from the Śoṇa mountain.

35-37. He was accompanied by the Daitya army. He killed many herds of deer in the forests with great force. He wandered (here and there) quickly eating them (on the way). Some deer were chased by powerful and brave (Daityas) holding bows. Distressed with fear they fled and entered the hermitage. The Daityas who chased them were on the point of killing those deer but were prevented by the heroic Baṭukas hurriedly (shouting), "Do not come here".

38-40. Then the Baṭukas were asked by the wicked Dānavas, "What is here?" They replied immediately, "A beautiful maiden is performing penance here. No strong man should enter here. It is frequented by sages. This is the place of penance of the Goddess. It accords protection to those who seek refuge therein."

On hearing these words of those (Baṭukas), the powerful and vicious Dānavas said, "So be it" and retreated. Thereafter, they thought about what should be done by them.

41. By means of their Māyā they assumed the forms of birds and entered the hermitage eagerly. They perched themselves on the branches of the trees in the park in order to see this place from the sky above.

42. In that beautiful forest containing the flowers of all the seasons, she was seen engaged in penance by those soldiers of the Daitya who were skilful in Māyā.

43. On seeing her beauty and grace as well as her firm decision to be engaged in penance, they were extremely surprised. They went (to Mahiṣa) and informed him of this.

44. Distressed by Smara (god of Love) he assumed the form of an old man and entered the hermitage. Then he was honoured by her friends and attendants. He stayed there as though he was rid of his fatigue.

45-49. The old man enquired of them, "What for is her penance?" They replied, "This maiden has been performing this penance for a long time for the sake of pleasing her husband. But that powerful husband is never pleased. At the time of marriage whatever is wished for must be done. But an unusual lord that he is, a great deal of materials, means and implements have been (demanded) by him. A new-born potter shall make fresh pots and bake them in the kiln. These fresh pots should be used for cooking the rice. Similarly all the articles should be freshly acquired and accumulated. They should never be the things seen before. When these materials are ready, let the marriage be celebrated immediately."

50. On hearing their words thus, Mahiṣa said laughingly, "It is certain that she will obtain me as the fruit of her penance. O young maiden, ascetic lady, listen to my entire wealth and assets.

51. I am Mahiṣa, the excessively powerful lord of Daityas. I am saluted by Suras. The entire space of the three worlds is seized by me.

52. On account of the prowess of my arms, the (title of) unrivalled hero rests in me. O young maiden, I can assume any form I wish. I am the bestower of all enjoyable pleasures.

53. Resort to me as your husband. Through the Kalpa trees brought (by me), I shall get for you fulfilment of all your desires.

54. By means of my penance, I shall create even Viśvakarman from the beginning. By means of my penance, I shall in an instant create thousands of Kāmadhenus.

55. With the nine *Nidhis* ('Treasures of Kubera') acquired by me and kept always at my side, it is possible to achieve every object (you) want. It can be achieved instantaneously."

56. On hearing his words, Gaurī remembered the Lord. Duly she broke her silence slowly. She spoke to him laughingly:

57-60. (*Partly defective text*) I will become the wife of a strong person. It is for that purpose that I have been practising penance for a long time. If you are strong, show me your strength."

On hearing her words uttered in a manner revealing the nature of women, the Asura, Mahiṣa shouted furiously, "You despicable girl! Who is this?"

On seeing that Mahiṣāsura approaching her with a desire to catch hold of her, that young maiden became unapproachable Durgā with fiery form.

On seeing Mahāmāyā blazing and standing in front of him, the demon who himself had the form of a buffalo, increased in size like Meru.

61. With the pair of his horns he constantly struck against the peaks of the Kula mountains. He called together his army that had filled the inner spaces of all the quarters.

62. Thereupon Devas, the chief of whom was Brahmā, bowed down to Durgā who had assumed the form of the Universe-destroying Fire. They worshipped Her with their different kinds of weapons.

63. Remaining concealed by means of their Māyā, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Sadāśiva gave her four, five and ten missiles and weapons respectively.

64. The Guardians of the Quarters, other Suras, the Mountains and the Oceans—all of them unassailable, worshipped her with their own ornaments and weapons.

65. With many hands blazing due to multitudes of arms and weapons, Durgā, the great Māyā, wore a coat of mail and immediately rode on her vehicle, the lion.

66. Mahiṣa was unable to bear her refulgence that filled all the quarters. On seeing the terrible form and features of Durgā, he fled.

67. Thereupon, seeing Mahiṣa fleeing because he was unable to bear her own terrible resplendent effulgence, She thought:

68. 'This wicked Mahiṣāsura must be killed through clever means. With great haughtiness (?) deer are made to turn back by the hunters in the forest.

69. By means of the words of messengers, soft and touching the vulnerable points, I shall attract him, produce anger in him and within a moment face him (in a direct combat).

70. In the case of persons with sinful proclivities, anger may be provoked suddenly when they hear words of righteous import and this will be the cause of their destruction and loss of life.

71. Or, if he happens to be righteous-minded and becomes calm, a violation of duty can be prevented by giving him some advice for his own welfare.

72. Anger must always be eschewed by persons engaged in penance if it is to be fruitful. Violation of duty should never be brooked. Indeed the anger on seeing violation of duty is the greatest penance.'

73. Thinking thus Gaurī mentally called the sage, the preceptor of Suras, by his name (and when he came) sent him towards the Asura. He was asked to assume the face of a monkey.

74. "O monkey-faced great sage, use all your Māyic powers and go. After delivering this message to Mahiṣa come back quickly:

75. 'O vicious one, do not torment the Lord of Aruṇādri thus. Here the prowess of the evil-minded ones disappears in a moment.

76. Neither the harassment of Kali nor the attack and infliction of pain through the Asuras, nor foolhardiness can bestow auspiciousness even with regard to persons with devotion to Śiva.

77. O Asura, by means of the meritorious deeds of the previous births you have acquired great prosperity and prowess. Do not become a moth in the fire of the Lord of Śoṇādri.

78. The riches and prosperity given by Śiva to you on the

strength of your previous austerities, may be burned here immediately like trees in a forest-conflagration.

79. It is here that pious souls and persons endowed with devotion to Śiva always live. This place is likely to be one infested with hundreds of ailments in the case of those who are engaged in torturing others.

80. You have acquired matchless wealth and prosperity. Your strength is unassailable to others. Why are you mean-minded and why do you invite destruction by your own defects?

81. That girl has been seen by me. She is considered to be feeble. But the Lord of Aruṇādri has permeated into her. Hence she is more powerful.

82. Or if you cannot control your mental predilections in spite of various cogent arguments and quotations from scriptures approved of by Śiva, bring your army.

83. With my brilliance I shall instantly burn your growing army whereby you are proud of your strength and through which you harass all the worlds.

84. Bring your entire army and place it in front of me along with their weapons. I shall immediately destroy it through my own soldiers created (by me).

85. Along with your army you will be cut down and you will be freed here itself from this life. Who knows what Śiva wishes?

86. Though prevented, people are induced by their previous Karmans. Being helpless, they commit sins again and reap befitting fruits.'

87. In order to make him turn away from evil pursuits and urge him to acquire virtues of eternal value, more and more kind words and sympathetic suggestions must be offered by you too."

88. The monkey-faced sage went as a messenger and stood in front of Mahiṣa. He repeated everything uttered and commanded thus by Gauri.

89. He (the demon) heard everything and became very furious. He rushed at the sage and began to swallow him but, thanks to his Māyic power, the sage managed to get away.

90-91. Thereafter, the evil-minded one called together all his army. It was fully armed and ready for battle. It was terrific unto all the worlds. It resembled the four oceans that come surging up

at the end of the Yuga. He ordered it to fight and the matchless group of selected soldiers from the army besieged Śoṇādri.

92. On seeing the wonderful army of the Daityas, Gaurī created many terrible fiery beroes, many groups of Bbūtas (i.e. goblins).

93-95. The goblins were of various sorts: single-footed ones, single-eyed ones, single-legged ones, those with hanging ears, those with fiabby breasts etc. Some of them had their faces in hands and feet; some had their heads in their bellies. Thus they set out. They spoke to one another like this: "I will swallow everyone. This is not sufficient for me. I myself will kill the entire army of the Daityas. What is there to be done by you? You may simply stand here looking on. I alone will be fighting here."

96. Even as they were talking thus, even as the Gaṇas were engaged in these conversations, the Goddess blew her conch in order to kill the multitude of the Daityas through the groups of Yoginīs.

97. On seeing Her in that form the soldiers of the Daitya rushed in. Holding their weapons aloft they displayed their prowess in front of their master.

98. The Daityas showered weapons in every quarter. She checked them all by means of the arrows discharged from her bow.

99. The goblins and the vampires created by tbe Goddess were invincible. They fought with the lakhs and crores of chariots, lordly elepbants and borses.

100. Mothers of different kinds and features, Ḍākinīs ('witches'), groups of Yoginīs, Piśācas ('ghosts'), Pretas ('spirits') and demons were created once again by her refulgence.

101. Tbe great Asuras were swallowed, ground into powder, split, torn and killed instantaneously by the invincible army created by the Goddess.

102. Tbe Goddess with the weapous was seen blazing brilliantly along with the groups of Bhūtaswho had killed the Asuras, wbo were dancing and wbo were satisfied with the blood and flesh they consumed.

103. When She (the Goddess) came to the penance ground from the Kailāsa peak, some Mothers had come along with her in order to protect her body.

104. They were Dundubhi, Satyavatī, Antavatī (Anavamī) and Sundarī. These four attendants followed her.

105. Cāmuṇḍā created by the Goddess was highly terrible on account of her curved teeth. She moved about fully contented with the blood, flesh, suet and hides of the Daityas.

106-110. She caught hold of a certain Asura and began to dance. On seeing her the haughty demon (appeared to) blaze her with the fire of his anger. With the tips of his horns he tossed the groups of clouds. His terrible eyes reaching the ears, rolled in a fierce manner. With his long tongue that resembled the flame of blazing fire, he licked the peaks of the lofty mountain. Kicking with the hoof, he tore up the ground. The dust particles were raised up frequently. With his roar he made the quarters resonant. His continued harsh roar was terrible. Devas had the erroneous notion that the Cosmic Egg would split thereby. They became deluded. He held up his tail like a rod. Striking with it he shattered the innumerable weapons that were showered on him. Only for his sure death did he rush towards Bhavānī who was seated on a lion. She shone brilliantly with three folds over her navel.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Mahiṣāsura Slain: His Head Stuck to Gaurī's Hand

Brahmā said:

1. As Goddess Gaurī seated on a lion shone brilliantly with different kinds of weapons, the infuriated demon (covered) her with a great shower of mountains.

2. With a great volley of arrows She checked it from afar and rived the whole of his body with very sharp weapons.

3. Though he was being split and pierced, the leading Daitya whose body was as hard as a rock, did not get disheart-

tened in the least; (on the contrary) his ferocity of fighting increased.

4. While being split and pierced hy sword, discuses, daggers, spears and other weapons, he vanished from the scene.

5. Thereafter, with the terrihle form of a lion with sharp curved teeth and sharpened claws, he moved round roaring fiercely again and again.

6. The lion of the Goddess struck the other lion with his paw. With his claws he tore open the chest of that demon-lion.

7. Thereafter, he approached in the form of a great tiger with wide gaping jaws. In order to kill him the Goddess thrust her hand with great force rapidly.

8-9. His tawny-coloured body was covered with long hlue stripes. He moved about like a golden mountain full of vehicles lined up on it. The strong (demon) appeared to be like (an animal) sent ahead hy the deer and other animals to save (themselves).[1] He appeared to exhihit the hlazing fire of his wrath with his flame-like lolling tongue.

10. As he rushed at her with gread speed, the Goddess hit that tiger with her *Bhalla* type of arrow that had a moon-like refulgence, in the manner with which Iśvara struck at the three cities.[2]

11. That arrow penetrated his mouth, pierced through his body, came out of it besmeared with hlood and entered the sky.

12. That Daitya then became an elephant and rushed quickly at the Goddess. Offering her (as it were) the many animals that had heen struck and torn as an oblation, he appeared to strive to please her.

13. On seeing that lordly elephant coming on drenching the surface of the earth with his ichor, the lion of the goddess roared and struck him.

14. Thereupon, a warrior holding the sword and the shield

1. The reference is to the famous fable in the *Pañcatantra*, which tells how all the animals approached the lion and agreed to send one animal per day to him, on condition that he should not harm other animals. Harṣa's Play *Nāgānanda* mentions a similar agreement between Garuḍa and Serpents.

2. This refers to the destruction of the demon city complex Triprua by Śaṅkara (Mbh, *Karṇa* 33,34).

in his hands rose up with a face terrible on account of curved teeth. He moved here and there.

15. With a number of swords and discuses shining in her hands, the Goddess fought with that warrior and broke his head.

16. Again he assumed the form of a buffalo resorting to the demoniacal Māyic power. Without any agitation he began to fight with the Goddess as before.

17. Thereupon, urged by the Devas and leading sages, sage Gautama began to enlighten the Mother of the universe by means of eulogies:

18. "It is accepted that the great *Prāṇaśakti* ('vitality') of the entire universe is (concentrated) in you. The other Śaktis too, viz. *Ojaśśakti* ('vigour'), *Jñānaśakti* ('knowledge') and *Balaśakti* ('physical strength') are inferred.

19. Why is this long-drawn fight resorted to by you today to delude (everyone). Let this Daitya be done away with for the protection of the universe.

20. It is by gathering together his bodies that have been broken and split by you that oblations unto you can be had as instructed in the Nigamas. They are the bestowers of boons.

21. Otherwise, why should there be this much of excitement, O Goddess, in slaying this enemy who is as insignificant as a blade of grass, since you have the refulgence of the fire of destruction (of the universe)?

22. (O Goddess) who have assumed a body made of the three *guṇas*, strengthening and fixing your own *Śakti*, draw out that *Prāṇaśakti* ('vitality') of the enemy by means of your trident."

23. On being addressed thus by that (sage) the Goddess attacked Mahiṣāsura with her trident and made him bear (Her) (i.e. sat on him).

24. Unable to bear the weight of the physical body of the Goddess equal to a number of mountains, Mahiṣāsura was distressed.

25. He was crushed and pounded. He rolled this way and that way and screamed. On being assailed, he trembled. The Lord of the Asuras tried to raise his head in order to escape but could not do so.

26. Pierced by the tips of the trident it appeared as though

an ocean was formed there by a stream of blood, an ocean with its body (surface) turned red on account of the dusk.

27. Then, the Goddess who tormented Mahiṣa, cut off his head with a sharp-edged sword and stood on his head and danced.

28. Siddhas, Gandharvas and great sages praised Durgā. A great shower of flowers was released by Devas all round. The Lord of Devas bowed down to the Goddess and eulogized her with palms joined in reverence.

Indra said:

29-32. Obeisance to you, to the mother of all the worlds, to the seed-consciousness of all living beings.

O Aṁbikā, you are the devotion, faith and *Śakti* ('energy') of those who worship you. You are the cause, the supreme fame, peace, control, skill and forbearance (incarnate). You are the only one having the universe as your form (i.e. omnipresent) though you are called by different names.

You have employed us in the various offices according to the achievements befitting our *Tapas* ('penance'). You have split the enemy. You shone as Śiva, worthy of being known. O Spouse of Śaṁbhu, this wicked demon Mahiṣa has been cut down and killed.

33-38a. His head that has been chopped off appears to be alive.

Let this form of yours be always in our (minds)—the form wherein you overpowered his head that has red eyes, sharp horns and blazing tongue and that shakes (always) and stands (towering above him).

With the weapons of all the deities, viz. discus, horn, bow, arrow, sword, shield, trident, belt, goad, whip, skull, thunderbolt etc. and with the gestures of granting boons and immunity from fear, you have the forms of all the deities. O Mother, you alone permeated them with all the weapons and thereby kill all our enemies. You have thousands of weapons. They consist of your superhuman powers.

All the enemies conquered by you, though they were equipped with different kinds of weapons and vehicles, although they were kings endowed with chariots, elephants and horses and all the

armies, shall have all their vitality and power burnt up, if they are devoid of your favour.

38b-44a. One who serves your lotus-like feet attains the lordship of the three worlds, though he might have been without any position or be of meagre prowess. He becomes popular, adorned with fame. Those who always meditate upon and worship this terrible form of yours, need not at all be afraid of enemies. They will be always victorious.

It is your form like this that is bowed to by Devas in all the worlds. Let it always be worshipped by Devas and your servants for the sake of achieving the desired objectives.

Mothers[1] have been created by you and they bestow all desired benefits. Let them be worshipped always along with the *Gaṇas*, in all places and regions.

This Daitya who has been killed by you has an imprint made on him by your foot. Thanks to your grace, he is always to be worshipped by your devotees, before you.

The Goddess who was praised thus by the Lord of Suras, and was served by all the sages and Suras and was a bestower of boons, said, "So be it" and sent them off to heaven.

44b-48. She herself established there that form of hers wielding different kinds of weapons, along with the Mothers. Thereby she made arrangements for the protection of the holy spot. She assumed her own form, devoid of impurities. Surrounded by her female attendants, she looked at the head of Mahiṣa deformed by the keen edge of the sword. Speaking about his diverse ways of harassment (?) of the worlds, the Young Maiden looked into his throat along with her friends. She saw there a *Liṅga*. She took it up in order to worship it. Gaurī suddenly grasped the *Liṅga* that was on his neck.

49. She looked for a long time at the *Liṅga* which was smeared with blood. That *Liṅga* got stuck to her palm. She tried to lay it aside but could not do so quickly, as it had stuck to her.[2]

1. Mātṛ-devatās, subordinate deities of the Goddess Gaurī.
2. Like demon Tāraka, Mahiṣa was a devotee of Śiva. Pārvatī, though

50. With great surprise the Goddess thought thus: 'What is this?' She stood in front of the great sages with great distress and dejection.

51. She was overcome with the grief of having killed a devotee of Śiva. She censured much her own foolishness caused by the peculiar feminine nature.

52-57a. Completely filled with remorse at (her) thoughtless commencement of the slaughter of devotees of Śiva. She approached Gautama, the excellent sage. The Young Maiden spoke to him about the rash act committed by herself: "O holy lord conversant with all pious activities and holy rites, O Gautama, O noble leader of sages, a sinful thing has been committed by me thinking it to be a pious and righteous act. In order to protect Devas, I attempted to grant them freedom from fear. Out of ignoranee I have crushed the Daitya Mahiṣa, a devotee of Śiva. In the case of those whose intellect is overpowered by *rajas*, there cannot be accumulation of merit, as it is always disturbed by hundreds of obstacles that spring up but is easy (for accomplishment) with the favour of the preceptor.

Those who resort to Śiva are unassailable. They cannot be easily suppressed even if tbey are of bad conduct, especially those who wear *Liṅgas*. Śiva honours them very much.

57b-58a. Formerly the demons who resided in the three Puras ('cities') used to wear *Liṅgas*. Then they could not be conquered by Śaṁbbu. When they abandoned the *Liṅgas* they were killed.

58b-61a. The *Liṅga* in his (i.e. Mahiṣa's) throat does not leave my palm. How can I dispel thc sin, the result of slaying a devotee of Śiva? Holding this *Liṅga* of his (Mahiṣa's) throat, I shall perform penance and pilgrimage until Śaṁbbu becomes pleased. Thereafter I shall take boly bath in the sacred centres of Śaṁbbu, the chief of which is Kailāsa and most of the other sacred places. Thereby I shall get redemption from sin."

61b-64. On hearing her weariness and worry due to the suspicion of unrighteousness and sin thus, (the sage) conversant with

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consort of Śiva, had to atone for killing a devotee of Śiva, though he might be uninitiated and wicked by nature. The greatness of Śiva's devotion is thus emphasized (*vide* the following verses).

the tenets of Śiva-cult spoke to her, as she appeared to be terrified:

"Do not be afraid, O Daughter of the Mountain, due to the delusion that a devotee of Śiva has been killed. O Daughter of the Mountain, it is difficult to find persons fully conversant with the subtle meanings of Dharma (Texts).

Twenty-eight crores of Āgamas have been uttered by the five faces of Sadāśiva occupied by *Sadyojāta* etc. They are to decide (doubtful cases) in the path of Śiva (i.e. *Śaiva cult*). They are the splendid guides to the devotees of Śiva.

65-67. Even leading sages are unable to comprehend (subtleties) in them. There are five manifestations (sects) of the Śaiva cult, viz. Kālamukha, Kaṅkāla, Śaiva, Pāśupata and Mahāvrata. There are various types and divisions among them, but all are devoted to Śiva. The only Godhead to be achieved or realized by all of them always is the powerful Śiva. All of them are always worthy of being worshipped (respected) by those who closely adhere to their own duties.

68-72a. A devotee of Śiva (is to be worshipped) by the devotees of Śiva devoid of jealousies and the obedient observers of the behests of Śiva.

Śiva is devoutly propitiated by many Vedas and *Yajñas*. Mahādeva is always the bestower of everything. Violence to living beings shall not be committed particularly by sages. But those who transgress *Śiva-dharma* (i.e. the tenets of Śiva-cult) should be immediately killed. Neither the sex nor the parentage should be taken into account of a person having the guise (of a devotee of Śiva). One should, without hesitation, kill a transgresser of Śaiva tenets and principles.

When a decline of *Śiva-dharma* is noticed by many persons conversant with Dharma by means of (their) keen intellect Śakti begins to act immediately.

72b-77. He is fortunate in having this *Liṅga* endowed with power and prosperity. That was why he could not be conquered by all the Devas.

It was because he had been overwhelmed by the curse of the great sages that he was killed, O Goddess, by you who are worthy of being honoured by Śaṅkara. Because of the support of Śiva, he insulted them (the sages) and acted contrary to their interest.

Hence they became angry. They cursed him: 'Let him become a buffalo, because he has been as wicked as a buffalo.'

Thereupon immediately after their imprecation he became a buffalo. He bowed to them in order to please them. He requested them to grant bim release and redemption from the curse. On being propitiated and pacified, they granted him the release along with the ability to assume any form he wished. In spite of being a buffalo he was granted death at the hands of the Goddess at the bidding of Śiva. You should not feel dejected by seeing a part(?) (? i.e. head sticking to your palm along with the *Liṅga*).

78-82. If Siddhas of the form of Śiva are insulted and dishonoured, wbom does not that insult afflict? When he had the form of a buffalo and when all the defects were present, the cessation of the curse brought about by you was secured by him by the favour of the Siddhas.

All the worlds have been saved. This wicked fellow too was saved wben be was released from the state of being a buffalo that had resulted from the curse.

O Daughter of the Mountain, the fiery *Liṅga* named Aruṇācala should be seen by you wbo are engaged in penance for the delight of Giriśa.

Clearly this (demon) had been a devotee of the Lord of Aruṇādri in the previous birth. In the state of a buffalo he became too arrogant, but was associated with *Liṅga*. In all the three worlds wbo is competent enough to kill one who wears a *Liṅga* witb devotion?[1]

83-87a. Formerly in the three cities (even) the three wicked ones were bonoured by Śiva.

O lady of excellent face, by his neck (having been) cut off by your sword this has been indicated that a *Liṅga* handed over without proper initiation etc. does kill. Of course, the *Liṅga* had been worn by Mahiṣa with great devotion. When it was reviled and defamed by a Jaina mendicant(?) he got enough proof and believed in its efficacy. Due to the contact with (the merit of) the penance of the previous birth he remembered and recollected (the events of the) previous birth. There is no doubt about this that

1. Throughout the Purāṇa (from Kedārakhaṇḍa to the end of Aruṇācala-Māhātmya) the importance of Liṅga-worship is emphasized.

he became liberated because of the contact and touch of your lotus-like feet. By means of the expiation suggested by me, (your) sins can be destroyed. Visiting the excellent Mountain is considered to be the greatest of all types of atonement.

87b-90. You establish the various followers of Śiva conversant with the principles of Śiva cult. For the sake of dispelling all defects invoke all the Tīrthas ('holy waters') and build up a lake. O lady of excellent face, take your bath therein. Repeat the *Aghamarṣaṇa Mantra*[1] and take the holy dip along with the *Liṅga*. This shall be done three times a day. At the end of the month, during the great festival of the sacrifice of Devas, propitiate Śiva in the form of Aruṇādri rendering all services in the course of the adoration."

91. On hearing these words of the sage impregnated with Śaiva ideas the Goddess, the Daughter of the Mountain, bowed down to by Devas, the Protectress of the universe, became pleased. She decided to perform this Śaiva holy rite because it was proper to have it in the presence of Śoṇācala. She wanted to wash off her sins. Hence she became inclined to take the holy plunge in the Tīrtha.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Reunion of the Goddess with Śiva

Brahmā said:

1. When the great sage served by the ascetics spoke thus, Girijā cast off her suspicion (about sin) based on the slaughter of a devotee of Śiva.

2. Then from the firmament there spoke a voice delightful to the ears:

"O Daughter of the Mountain, do not go for the atonement of the sin.

3-4. Let the nine holy rivers (Tīrthas), viz. Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sindhu, Godāvarī, Sarasvatī, Narmadā, Kāverī, Śoṇa and

1. viz. *Āpo hi ṣṭhā mayobhuvaḥ etc*, RV X.9.1; TS 4.1.5.1, VS 11.50.

Śoṇanadī be present here in the rocky surface torn off by your sword, O Goddess. Perform the rite of expiation of sin (i.e. *aghamaṛṣaṇa*) here.

5. In the coming Aśvayuja (i.e. Āśvina) month on the day with the constellation of Jyeṣṭhā take your plunge in the Khaḍgatīrtha[1] (i.e. the holy lake made with the sword) along with the *Liṅga*. Stay here for a month.

6-12a. After completing the ablutions corresponding to the three times (morning, midday and evening) prescribed for the pressing of Soma, lasting a month which is measured(?) by the Guardians of the Quarters, you will attain purity from sins. Then you install the *Liṅga* sticking to your hand in front of the Tīrtha (for the purpose of blessing the worlds) and come up. By taking bath in this excellent Tīrtha and worshipping Śiva in the Liṅga, one can attain the destruction of the three kinds of distress. There is no doubt about it that all the three worlds will attain the same. Install the Liṅga that removes all the sins in the presence of the holy water. Install it with firm devotion for the perpetual welfare of the worlds. During *Uttarāṣāḍhā* associate with Devakī(?) with great festival for ten days. Take the sacred valedictory bath on the day of Kṛttikā which is the holy star pertaining to the Fire-god. In the evening worship my body, i.e. the mountain Śoṇācala, duly. Thereafter I shall show you my fiery form. If this is done by you, it will be conducive to the protection of the worlds."

12b-13. On hearing these words as well as the words of the great sage, the Daughter of the Mountain began to carry out both the suggestions by means of penance. Without any excitement (i.e. calmly), she pierced and tore open the rocky surface with her sword.

14-15. Instantaneously there arose the nine holy rivers there. Meditating upon the Liṅga that remained in the demon's throat, the Daughter of the Mountain plunged into that Tīrtha with the permission of the sages. All the nine Tīrthas had a crystalline lustre.

1. So called as Pārvatī's sword pierced the rocky earth. The emerging water is a mix of the nine sacred rivers mentioned in vv 3-4 above. Some streams representing these rivers are still shown on the hill.

16-18. But since Gaurī remained within, the entire Tīrtha became dark in colour, thanks to her lustre. While the Daughter of the Mountain remained within the Tīrtha for thirty days, the mind of Śaṁbhu that had been scorched by the pangs of separation became restless. She created within the water lotuses by means of her glorious splendour, a forest of blue lotuses by means of the eyes and lilies by means of her smile.

By that stay in water of the Goddess all the worlds became free from torments, contented and blessed with the fruits belonging to the different seasons.

19-21a. At the end of the month, she got up and performed the festival of the Goddess. In the month of Kārttika with the constellation named Kṛttikā[1] at the beginning of the night, she worshipped the Liṅga in the form of Aruṇādri with requisite materials and services achieved through penance. The Mother of the universe eulogized the Liṅga:

21b-27a. "Obeisance to you having the form of the universe, to the Lord having Śoṇācala for your body; obeisance to the Lord with the Liṅga in the form of the fiery mountain; to the destroyer of all sins. Your pervasive extent and greatness could not be measured and determined by Brahmā and Viṣṇu. You are calm, though you have the fiery form, for the sake of bringing about the blessing of the worlds. You create the groups of *Tattvas* (i.e. cosmic constituents) through Śakti. You have the features of the (universe-destroying) Kāla ('god of Death').

O Lord of Aruṇādri, O excellent one among mountains, O ocean of beauty and charming grace, this is a wonderful form of yours comprehensible through the Vedas and worshipped by Suras. You are mentioned as the seed of all refulgences. O Maheśvara, O Lord, indeed your refulgence is divine and supreme, the refulgence that was seen formerly by Brahmā and Viṣṇu who were seeking the same. O Lord of Devas, I am sanctified by your vision today. Show me your divine form, the supreme one that dispels all defects."

27b-31a. While the Goddess was praying to Śiva in the form of Aruṇādri (he) became manifest and covered the entire universe

1. This means the full-moon day in Kārttika—the most important day of the festival of Aruṇācala.

with his refulgence. A supreme effulgence was seen—a splendour resembling erores of rising suns, equal to a erore of moons and on a par with a crore of universe-destroying fires. Along with the sages, the Mother of lotus-like eyes, with her heart filled with surprise and wonder, bowed down with great devotion. She was delighted too. Then from that massive storehouse of brilliance—Aruṇādri—stood up a *Puruṣa* of sweet tone and golden complexion who spoke these words:

31b-35. "I am delighted with your austerities performed in my abodes and holy spots. This fiery form has been seen by you now. O Goddess in the form of the universe, you shall protect the worlds by various means. You do perform penances on the earth. What else is desired by you? The mass of darkness of yours that had risen up has entirely become calm and subdued due to the brilliance of my eyes and by looking at this fiery brilliance. This wicked Mahiṣa who worships the Liṅga, has adopted my devotion in an irregular manner without proper initiation. On the advice of an atheist, this Liṅga that was placed in his throat, had been (once) swallowed by him.

36. He had no belief and faith in me, though I stayed in his throat in the form of the Liṅga. Gradually he attained the charming life (birth) of a sage.

37. This Mahiṣa who has been killed by you, had been a devotee of mine. Meditating on and worshipping me, he attained the state of a leader of Gaṇas.

38-44a. Since he had been wearing my Liṅga for a long time, O Goddess, he had his own *Siddhi*. Hence neither lack of faith in the Śivaliṅga nor dishonour to the devotees of Śiva should ever be indulged in by the devotees desirous of liberation. If the Liṅga is worn by anyone out of campulsion without any initiation, it does not give him any benefit. Further it kills him like a thunderbolt.

But in this matter there is no blemish in you because you have destroyed all defects by looking at Śoṇācala. Your eyes have become fruitful. (*Defective Text*) The wet nurse bas rendered help unto you by suckling your son(?) She has made you *Apītakucā* ('one whose breasts have not been sucked') and therefore endearing to the devotees and their protectress. Expiation has been spoken to you by being present here on the day with the

constellation Kṛttikā. Be therefore the deity named *Apttakucā*. Conclude the remaining part of the worship for the sake of blessing the devotees. Be the personification of sympathy and worship me. Be the heroine *Apttakucā*."

44b-48. On hearing these exceedingly consoling words of the Lord, Aṁbikā bowed down to him and requested him: "O Lord of Devas, this refulgence has been shown by you who are endowed with grace. It has been seen by Devas and human beings directly in the month of Kārttika at the great festival on the conclusion of my holy observances. Let your great refulgence be seen (on the day) with the constellation named Kṛttikā. By seeing this supreme brilliance every year, let all the creatures be liberated from all sins." The words, "So be it" were uttered by the Lord of Devas. He then vanished within the mountain.

49-54. Thereafter, Aṁbikā circumambulated the (mountain) along with her companions and attendants. She made the Liṅga of the form of Aruṇādri one of the emeraldine lustre by means of her refulgence of cloudlike dark brilliance spreading all round. While she walked slowly emitting the lustre of her lotus-like feet, she (appeared to) spread on the ground all round petals of lotuses along with sprouts.

By means of the refulgence of her eyes she appeared to worship Śoṇādri all round with innumerable petals of full-blown golden lotuses and blue ones.

She was served by the womenfolk of the Guardians of the Quarters beginning with Indra. She was propitiated by the groups of Mothers, with the offerings of scents, ornaments etc.

She was surrounded by the women of the Suras who carried umbrellas, chowries, golden pitchers, fans, fruits etc. She was accompanied by the maidens of ascetic families. Thus, she circumambulated Aruṇādri which was self-luminous.

55-61. She was desirous of *Sāyujya* (union) with Śiva. Therefore the Daughter of the Mountain circumambulated the mountain Aruṇādri as if it were the sacred marital fire.[1] While she was

1. Marriages are to be solemnized in the presence of fire. The most important rite in marriages is *Saptapadi*. But this is to be done on the north of the marital fire. Pārvati was the consort of Śiva. Hence the semblance between Aruṇādri and marital fire.

circumambulating step by step, with great devotion, the Devas, the leading Suras sent by Śambhu, surrounded her. Sarasvatī came there along with Brahmā and Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) along with Viṣnu. The Daughter of the Mountain was accompanied by all the wives of the Guardians of the Quarters. Granting boons by (pouring) water, she appeared to obstruct Devendra(?) (the Rain-god). She appeared to cool down the Lord in the (fiery) form of the Lord of mountains. By means of the penance she remembered the Lord as inseparable from her. She seemed to make it known how proper it was to undertake the difficult task of staying under water. She wanted, as it were, to advise the sages about the means of measurement of the Devas(?) gradually and so she engaged herself in penance to continue, as it were, the play she had learned and practised formerly. She thought about herself scorched by the pangs of separation and also about Śiva in a similar state, and therefore to cool both she stayed under the water of all the Tīrthas that rose up on the rocky surface.

62-65a. She stood herself in the midst of the five fires (as if) desirous of speaking out the superiority of the world(?)—the *Pañcāgnis* ('five fires') that destroy sins, that could not be easily performed and that brought about the culmination of desires. After having attained it, she stood there to calm it down.

She wanted to wash the Liṅga that had been smeared with the blood flowing from the neck of Mahiṣāsura. She wanted to wash it with the pure waters of that Tīrtha.

A beautiful city named Aruṇa was built by Viśvakarman for the pleasure of the Lord of Śoṇādri, the Lord of the Goddess Apitakucā.

65b-72. The courtesans staying on the tops of the mansions of that city appeared to be desirous of conquering the Amara (celestial) ladies. They had surpassed the clouds and lightning [(1) because the mansions were very tall and (2) because they had brilliant refulgence]. On the lofty tops of the mansions in that city the courtesans sat and sang.

The city shone with Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas and Vidyādharas. Golden chariots moved about in that city. It shone with eight main highways that appeared to be the feet of the fabulous animal Śarabha. It was adored by the eight Guardians of the Quarters. It consisted of Siddhas (i.e. persons endowed with the

eight Siddhis (or super-natural powers). They were the dependents of Aṣṭamūrti ('eight-formed god' i.e. Śiva). They had the eight-fold (eight different types of) devotion. They had their attention turned towards the eight parts of the army or court. It consisted of the people of the four castes and was further developed by the people of subsidiary castes.

It contained many halls and chambers where gold dazzled and made it difficult to be looked at. Various kinds of musical instruments—conchs, Dundubhi drums, Nissānas (wardrums), Mṛdaṅgas and Murajas (types of drums), flutes, lutes, cymbals etc. were being played there. It was rendered brilliant and resonant with the talks of people and the sound of the recitation of Vedic *Mantras* of great sages with their minds directed towards Śiva. It can be resorted to in the day in order to have the vision of the divine form of the Bull-emblemed Lord. Both in the night and the day, always equal brilliance is seen because of the sparkle and refulgence of the nine gems through which the nine Planets exhibit their power to grant prosperity.

73-75. Viṣṇu stood in front and lovingly served the Lord. The thousand-eyed Śakra came there along with the groups of Suras. A shower of flowers endowed with divine fragrance fell all round.

The wind, cool on account of its close contact with the waters of the celestial Gaṅgā, blew rendering the faces of the quarters wholly fragrant by means of its sweet scent.

76. Tossing and shaking the clusters of vegetation with the tips of his horns, the haughty and excited bull bellowed frequently.

77. All the seasons themselves gladly served him by means of their proper seasonal and pleasing flowers.

78. Siddhas of different kinds of features and the great sages as well as Suras with great enthusiasm and eagerness came there along with Gaṇas. They were desirous of seeing (the Lord and the Goddess).

79. A handful of the great essential extract as a token of the observance of the holy rites and consisting of powdered saffron mixed with camphor dust was scattered all round.

80. Then the whole universe was filled with the sounds of conchshells, flutes and trumpets accompanied by the sounds of

various kinds of drums such as Mṛdaṅga and Mardala as well as Paṭaha and Dundubhi and also that of Jhallarī ('cymbals'). These instruments were played by Suras.

81. Surrounded and accompanied by sages and Devas and in accompaniment to the songs of the music party of Tumbura interspersed with the continuous dances of the celestial damsels, the Bull-emblemed Lord was seen there seated on his bull.

82. Śiva, the receptacle of sympathy, the enemy of the god of Love and great on account of his fortitude, gracefully approached Śivā who was standing with the head bent low. Dispelling her bashfulness he placed her on his lap and became delighted.

83. Accompanied by Lalitā, his beloved, and surrounded by the assembly of Suras and leading sages, he witnessed the graceful dances of the celestial damsels to the accompaniment of music. He repeatedly witnessed this with great eagerness.

84. Then Śiva accepted the extremely fragrant collections of scents, the chief among them being sandalwood of great auspiciousness, handed over by the Lord of Suras, along with the varieties of musk sent by mount Himālaya.

85. His excellent hands were eagerly moving restlessly for the close embrace of the covering of the budlike breasts of Apītakucā. They were adorned. They were beautified by means of garlands. They were smeared (with unguents) whereby they turned white.

86. After getting the Daughter of the Mountain who was fascinating on account of the auspicious scents applied over the hard, protruding, plump, budlike breasts, Śiva dispelled all his pangs of separation.

87. Then the Lord of Aruṇaśaila himself asked the Daughter of the Mountain to request for the desired boon. She had become emaciated because of the separation from him, but it was mitigated by means of bundreds of diversions and amusements.

88. The Daughter of the Mountain bowed down to the Enemy of the Puras (i.e. Śiva) with great eagerness. For the sake of the protection of the three worlds, she requested for the following boon from the Lord of Soṇagiri who was liberal-minded and joyous and ready to bless.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Granting of Boons to Pārvatī

Brahmā said:

1. Then Gaurī of that sort (i.e. as described above), the mother of the universe, bowed down to Śiva Śaṁbhu and prayed for non-separation from him.

2. Gaurī, the beautiful lady, who was clever in conversation and full of compassion submitted thus to him for the sake of conferring blessing on the worlds:

3. "This form of yours which is very charming, should not be abandoned. I should never be abandoned even if I am guilty of offence. This fascinating form of yours is conducive to the auspiciousness of all the worlds.

4-5. Let this form endowed with divine fragrance be always seen by everyone. O Īśāna, be victorious. (But) Enough of your assuming terrible forms and guises through serpents, poison, the skull of Brahmā and the sacred ash. Be gentle and tender with divine garlands, scents, garments etc.

6-7. Bedecked in gemset, bejewelled ornaments, sport about, O Maheśvara, O Īśāna. Let the maidens of Devas and Gandharvas come here everyday and serve the Lord of Devas with dances, songs and instrumental music.

Let the Gaṇas too become human beings and serve you day and night.

8. Through your favour let our union be highly fragrant and promoter of welfare and be seen (as) the bestower of all wealth and prosperity.

9. O Lord of Devas, it is here that the bodily form consisting of all the *Mantras* was assumed. Let service be rendered unto you. Let there be devotion (unto you) forever.

10. O Lord who are the sole refuge of all, let thousands of offences committed everyday knowingly or unknowingly by your devotees be excused by you by glancing at them (kindly)."

11. On hearing these words of the Goddess, Śaṁbhu, the Lord of Śoṇācala, the bestower of boons, granted everything desired by her as a boon.

12. He was desirous of having sexual intercourse with her. Out of eagerness Śiva asked her to apply the fascinating musk (to herself).

Mahādeva said:

13. There was a great Daitya named Pulaka.[1] He assumed the form of a deer and performed a great deal of penance. He obtained exceedingly wonderful fragrance as a boon from me.

14. After obtaining the boon, he fascinated celestial young women through his fragrance. In the same way he took up an evil course and harassed the entire universe.

15. On being requested by Devas I called the leader of Asuras and commanded him, "Give up your demoniac form for the sake of the protection of the worlds."

Pulaka said:

16. I shall abandon this body at your bidding, O Lord of the Chiefs of Devas.

Then with great devotion in his mind, he bowed to me. Requesting me, he said thus:

17. "This scent originating from my limb is divine and fascinating to the universe. O Lord of the Chief of Devas, let this be taken up by you with eagerness in your mind.

18. Let this become famous always as one born of the sweat of Pulaka. This musk shall be conducive to the increase of the romantic sentiment in the world.

19. Let it be your favourite, the bestower of splendour, good felicity, beauty and graceful charm.

I am leaving off my body. O Lord of Devas, O Lord of the universe.

20-27. Let it be always honoured by the Goddess who is covetous of divine fragrance. Those who are born of a part of mine and who acquire fragrance through my penance, may please be merged in your form, O Lord of Devas, in the form of unguent smeared (over your body)." When I said, "So be it", that Daitya named Pulaka renounced his life in me and cast off his body.

1. This story explains how musk-deer came into being and why musk is an important article in Śiva-worship.

Thereafter, with great affection, I used to apply the musk of excessive fragrance originating from his body. It increases feelings of love bundreds of times. O Goddess of the Chiefs of Devas, your body has become lean on account of the penances you have performed. My limbs too have become scorched due to separation from you. Give it the necessary satiation now.

After praising the wonderful devotion of Pulaka thus in diverse ways, Mahādeva anointed Pārvatī, the shrine of love. The Lord laughingly asked Pārvatī of graceful features, "What is this raised in your hand?" The Mother of the universe looked at him and spoke after bowing to the Lord of Aruṇādri about the arrival of that flower which was always in her hand.

The Goddess said:

28. At your bidding, O Lord of Devas, I came to Kāñcī of golden gates and archway from the peak of Kailāsa in order to perform penance.

29-33. I got this excellent Kalhāra ('golden lotus') originating from Mānasa lake. It never fades. It has great fragrance. (With this) I propitiated Mahādeva. This flower which had been employed by me in worshipping incessantly is never fading.

The great refulgence that never diminished is sprinkled with ghee (obtained from the milk) of Kāmadhenu. This (Lord) is to be visited by kings and protected by them always. The characteristic features of Dharma should be laid down(?) for the sake of the eager protection of the worlds, for the achievement of all desired things and to cause pleasure to me. The thirty-two Dharmas established by me for the protection of the worlds should be preserved scrupulously by those who come to bis presence.

Let this shining form of mine be visited when the Sun enters Virgo (i.e. a sign of the Zodiac). This form is endowed with all ornaments. It has festivals with all kinds of enjoyment of pleasure.

Brahmā said:

34-39a. On hearing these words of the Goddess, Śaṁbhu, the Lord of Śoṇācala, the bestower of boons, said, "So be it" and granted her as boon all that she desired. This is Śoṇācala seen as

a glorious (deity) worshipped by the worlds. He is always accompanied by Gaurī, the bestower of boons. He is always surrounded by all kinds of enjoyment of pleasures.

All those who visit and bow down to this form of Śaṁbhu stationed in the form of Aruṇādri are blessed.

The persons on the earth who listen to the greatness of Aruṇācala will have the full complement of riches perpetually.

By retaining (in memory) this greatness one attains glory, fluency of speech, handsome features, unobstructed power and destruction of sins.

39b-40. Visiting Śoṇādri yields the benefit of taking holy bath in all Tīrthas and the benefit of all *Yajñas* and holy rites. It yields the favour of Sadāśiva too.

41. Thus the Goddess who came from the peak of Kailāsa at the bidding of Śiva, attained redemption from the curse by visiting Śoṇācala.[1]

42. Even when there are other highly meritorious holy spots on the earth as well as in heaven, Śaṁbhu took delight in being persent here.

43. This Sadāśiva himself is seen in the form of Aruṇācala. It is the supreme refulgence that is the cause of creation, sustenance and annibilation (of the universe).

44. This refulgent *Liṅga* is bowed down to by all the Devas and is seen. This (Bhārata) is the land of *Karmans*; therefore it is superior in Virtue (Dharma).

45. Men with devotion whose sins have been dispelled by the brilliance of the Lord of Aruṇācala will get happiness everywhere in this world.

46. Śaṁbhu is under the control of those people who worship the Lord of Aruṇādri by means of circumambulations, prostrations, austerities and holy observances.

47. Neither with penance nor by Yogic exercise nor by charitable gifts is Śaṅkara pleased so much as by the sight of Aruṇācala even if it is obtained only once.

48. The self-born Vedas along with the *Itihāsas* are stationed always in the firmament all round in the forms of mountains and eulogize the Aruṇa mountain.

1. This is the crux of the greatness of Aruṇācala.

49. Neither by me nor by Viṣṇu can the greatness of this mountain be recounted in words even in the course of hundreds of crores of years.

50. Devas, the Chief of whom is Indra (or Viṣṇu), the celestial trees beginning with Kalpaka, remained concealed in form and serve Aruṇācala always.

51. Neither the defects of *Kali* nor the eruptions of ailments and worries will be present there where the *Liṅga* named Aruṇācala is worshipped.

52. Thus everything has been narrated to you regarding the region of Śaṁbhu, the story of Aruṇācala which is difficult of access even through the merits accumulated for a period of a Kalpa.

Sūta said:

53. Drinking through the pair of ears this charming nectarine river of the story of the Lord of Aruṇa mountain—the river of great liberal-mindedness arising from the month of Brahmā—sage Sanaka acquired the benefit of all his austerities.

:: End of Aruṇācala Māhātmya (Pūrvārdha) ::

SKANDA PURĀṆA

Book I : MĀHEŚVARAKHAṆḌA

Section III : ARUṆĀCALAMĀHĀTMYA

UTTARĀRDHA

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: *Mārkaṇḍeya's Query*

Obeisance to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Here begins the second half of the *Greatness of Aruṇācala.*

Vyāsa said:

1. The sages residing in the forest of Naimiṣa spoke to Sūta:

The sages said:

Describe to us the most excellent one among the holy places of Śiva.

Sūta said:

2. Listen ye all to what has been formerly heard by Mārkaṇḍeya directly from Nandiśvara. I shall narrate it, O sages. Listen with respect.

Mārkaṇḍeya[1] *requested*:

3. O Nandiśvara,[2] the greatness of Mādhyameśvara[3] has

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1. A famous ancient sage, son of Mṛkaṇḍu. He became immortal by Śiva's grace. He is said to survive the extinction of the world (*Pralaya*). He played an important advisory role to Pāṇḍavas by narrating old legends etc. (See Mbh, *Vana*, Chs. 188-191, also *Śānti* and *Anuśāsana Parvas*).

2. The chief of the attendants of Śiva—"another body of Śiva" according to VR VII.16.15. He was the (adopted?) son of sage Śilāda and was himself a great sage credited with a treatise on grammar. His close association with Śiva transformed him in public imagination as being a vehicle of Śiva.

3. A place on the bank of Mandākini sacred to Śiva. It is one of the

been recounted by you. Everything has been listened to with attention by me also with a mind melting with devotion and faith.

4. Still, O lord of Devas, O storehouse of mercy, tell me further what I am going to ask you with reverence.

5. There is nothing here in the three worlds that is not known to you in all the Āgamas and Purāṇas externally and internally.

6. In the matter pertaining to heavenly pleasures and ultimate salvation of men it is the earth that is of special significance in order to make different persons devoted to different aims and purposes do all the requisite holy rites (here).

7. As it has been mentioned by yourself, the aim of men is of three types, viz. happiness on earth, enjoyment of pleasures in heaven and final liberation.

8. The first two become exhausted and used up by the dwindling-down of merit, but the third one does not become reduced or wasted away because it does not depend upon *Karmans* at all.

9. It has been mentioned by you that it can be achieved through pure (spiritual) knowledge. But pure knowledge is difficult to be obtained by all embodied beings.

10. Where, in which holy place, is that pure knowledge secured by all embodied beings merely through the worship of Śiva without making a detailed study of the scriptures etc.?

11. The intellect of all embodied beings does not engage in the various activities connected with the acquisition of knowledge, yogic practice and holy rites, and regular behaviour—not even those prescribed in *Śaiva Āgamas*.

12. Let this be told to me: What is that holy spot, by the greatness of which embodied beings will acquire pure knowledge through a modicum of holy observances.

13. Let that holy spot be mentioned where salvation can be obtained even by immature ones by applying sacred ash, wearing Rudrākṣa beads or by remembering the Lord (even) once.

Pañca-Kedāras, viz. Kedāranātha, Tuṅganātha, Rudranātha, Mādhyameśvara and Kalpeśvara—all situated in the Himalayan chain in Garhwal (U.P.).

14. Let me be blessed with the information regarding that holy spot where, without any obstacle, salvation will be achieved by embodied beings by staying there even without the consciousness thereof.

15. Let that holy spot be mentioned where salvation can be attained even by immobile beings, creatures of animal species and persons born in mixed castes.

16. After saying this the son of Mṛkaṇḍu (i.e. sage Mārkaṇḍeya) with the other noble-souled leading sages fell at the pair of the lotus-like feet of the son of Śilāda, the ocean of all Āgamas.

CHAPTER TWO

A List of Different Sacred Places of Śiva on the Earth

Nandikeśvara replied:

1. O sage, the most excellent among the devotees of Maheśvara, it is for the welfare of all living beings, whether mobile or immobile, that (such) a holy place is being enquired into by you.

2. The birth of embodied beings has been ordained in different species by the Lord in accordance with their different *Karmans*.

3. You have wished to hear (about these holy spots) for the sake of their great welfare. Otherwise the (cycle of their) worldly existence will not cease even in hundreds and crores of *Kalpas*.

4. The continuity of birth and death will never cease because they possess very little knowledge or have not performed holy rites adequately. It will go on like the *Ghaṭṭyantra* (i.e. a series of buckets in a mechanical device to raise water from a well).

5. How can any embodied being be disconnected from the embryonic membrane? How can one be able to have perfect rest without pure knowledge?

6. The regions have been mentioned by me before inci-

dentally along with the names of different sages, wherein Lord Śiva resides.

7. Some of them are on the banks of Gaṅgā; some on the banks of Sarasvatī. Others are on the banks of Kālindī (Yamunā). Some of them are on the banks of Śoṇa.

8. Others are on the banks of Narmadā; still others on the banks of Godāvarī. Some are on the banks of Gomatī; others on the banks of Haimavatī.[1]

9. Others are on the shores of the ocean; still others are on the islands in the rivers; some are on the mouths (sources) of the rivers and some at their confluences.

10. Some are on the banks of Kṛṣṇaveṇī;[2] others are near Tuṅgabhadrā. A few are on Upaveṇī and others near the river Śakti.

11. Others are on the banks of Kāverī. Some are on the banks of Vegavatī.[3] Others are on the banks of Tāmraparṇī; a few are on the banks of Muralā.[4]

12-13. Some are on the banks of Airāvatī.[5] Others are on the banks of Yātukāṁkṣikā(?). A few are on the banks of Kanyā; a few are on the banks of Kumārī.[6] Others are near Tamasā[7] and Varuṇā.[8] Others are on either side of Mandākinī; others are on the banks of Śiprā; still others in the neighbourhood of Sarayū.

14. Some are near Vipāśā,[9] while others are on the banks of Śatadru;[10] some are near Carmaṇvatī,[11] while some are on the banks of Bhīmarathī.[12]

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1. Generally identified with the river Rishikulya in Ganjam District, Orissa.
2. Krishna which rising in the Western Ghats joins the Bay of Bengal.
3. Vai Gai on the banks of which Madura stands.
4. The river Nerbuda (De 134).
5. Rāvī (Punjab) (De 9).
6. The author probably means Kanyākumārī.
7. The river Tons, a branch of Sarayu. It flows through Azamgarh and joins Gaṅgā.
8. The river Barṇā in Vārāṇasī.
9. Bias (Punjab).
10. Sutlej.
11. The river Chambal flows through Rajasthan and M.P.
12. Bhima on which stands the holy place Pandharpur. It joins Krishna.

15. Some are in the vicinity of Bindusaras;[1] others are on the banks of Paṁpā Lake.[2] A few are very near Bhairavī and some are on the banks of Kauśikī.[3]

16. Others are on the banks of Mālinī;[4] still others on the banks of Gandhavatī.[5] A few are in the neighbourhood of Mānasa. Some are on the banks of Acchoda.[6]

17. Others are on the (shores of) Indradyumna lake; a few are on Maṇikarṇikā. Others are on the banks of Varadā;[7] a few are on Tāpī; others are in the vicinity of Pātālagaṅgā; still others near Śarāvatī.

18. Some are on the banks of Lohityā;[8] some are on the banks of Kālamā; others are very near Vitastā;[9] still others are near Candrabhāgā.[10]

19. Some are in the neighbourhood of Suralā; others are on the banks of Payoṣṇī;[11] some are on the banks of Madhumatī;[12] some are near Pinākinī.[13]

20. The holy place of Vārāṇasī has already been mentioned. It is very sacred and it extends to five *Krośa* (i.e. 15 kms). There the Lord named Avimukta is worshipped by Viśālākṣī.

21. Know that place to be Kāśī, O sage, where there is (the

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1. A sacred pool in Rudra-Himalayas, two miles south of Gangotri. Here King Bhagiratha performed penance for bringing down Gaṅgā from heaven.
2. A lake near Hampi in Karnataka. It is associated with Rāma and his ally Sugrīva.
3. The river Kosi.
4. A tributary of Ghagra. The hermitage of Kaṇva, Śakuntalā's foster-father, was on this river (Vide Kālidāsa's *Śākuntala*, Act III).
5. A small branch of Sipra on which the temple of Mahākāla is situated (De 61).
6. Lake Achchāvat in Kashmir, six miles from Marttanda (De 1).
7. The river Wardha in Vidarbha, Maharashtra.
8. Brahmaputra.
9. Jhelum in Kashmir.
10. The river Chenab (Punjab).
11. Pain-Ganga, a branch of Wardha, Vidarbha, Maharashtra.
12. Mowar or Modhwar river. It rises near Ranod and joins Sind in Malwa (De 115).
13. The river Pennarin, Tamil Nadu (De 157).

Tīrtha of) Kapālamocana and where Kālabhairava is also there. It is the place where Rudra-hood is attained on dying there.[1]

22. Gayā and Prayāga have also been mentioned to you. They bestow all types of *Siddhis*. By offering rice-balls there Pitṛs (Manes) certainly become contented.

23. You have heard about Kedāra[2] where the Daitya who had assumed the form of buffalo was killed by the Goddess. This place causes all welfare unto men.

24. The holy place of Badarikāśrama[3] confers all types of *Siddhis* unto men. The Three-eyed Lord accompanied by the Goddess is present here. He has been worshipped by Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

25. The sacred place of Naimiṣa has been heard of by you. It is the place where the holy Lord Maheśvara is called *Devadeva* ('Lord of Devas'). The Goddess (is also present) holding the Sāraṅga ('Deer').

26. The holy spot of Amareśa has been described as conducive to the attainment of all objectives. There the Lord is called Oṁkāra[4] and the great Goddess is called Caṇḍikā.

27. The great holy place named Puṣkara has been spoken of by me and heard of by you. There the Lord is called Rujogandhi and the great Goddess Puruhūtā.

28. The sanctifying place named Āṣāḍhī has been mentioned to you by me. There Hara is called Āṣāḍheśa and the supreme Goddess is called Ratiśā.

29. The holy spot called Daṇḍimuṇḍī has been told to you, where the great Lord is Muṇḍī and the supreme Goddess is Daṇḍikā.

30. The pure and sanctified holy spot named Lākula[5] has

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1. It is an age-old belief that death at Vārāṇasī liberates a person from *Saṁsāra*.

2. Kedāranātha—a great Liṅga of Śiva—is on the south of the confluence of Mandākinī and Dūdhagaṅgā. The shrine is in the region of Rudra-Himalayas, Garhwal (U.P.).

3. Badarikāśrama or Badrinath in Garhwal (U.P.) famous for the temple of Nara-Nārāyaṇa.

4. Oṁkāra—Māndhāta on Narmadā, 32 miles noth-west of Khandwa (De 142).

5. Karwan in Dabhoi District, Gujarat.

been mentioned to you hy me. It is the place where Hara is Lākulīśa and Sarvamaṅgalā (i.e. Pārvatī) is Anaṅgā.

31. The holy place Bhārabhūti has been mentioned to you by me. There Śaṁbhu is called Bhāra and the daughter of the Mountain is called Bhūti.

32. The sacred spot named Arālakeśvara has heen mentioned to you by me. The Trident-bearing Lord is called Sūkṣma there and the daughter of the Mountain is called Sūkṣmā.

33. The great holy spot named Gayā has been described to you hy me. There Śivā ('Pārvatī') is called Maṅgalā and Śankara is called Prapitāmaha ('Great-grandfather').

34. The sacred place called Kurukṣetra has been described to you. There the Goddess is Sthāṇupriyā and the Lord is called Sthāṇu.

35. The excellent holy spot named Kanakhala[1] has been mentioned to you by me. There the enemy of the Puras (i.e. Śiva) is Ugra and the daughter of the excellent Mountain is Ugrā.

36. The great holy place named Tālaka has been spoken of hy me, O Mārkaṇḍeya. There the Goddess ia Svāyaṁbhuvī and the supreme Lord is Svayaṁbhū.

37. The great holy spot named Aṭṭahāsa[2] has been mentioned hy me to you. By worshipping Īśa there Arka (i.e. the Sungod) had all his desires fulfilled.

38. The holy place named Kṛttivāsa has been mentioned to you, O most excellent one among those conversant with the Vedas. Residence at this place is dearer to the Lord wearing the elephant hide than Kailāsa.

39. The great Īśa named Mallikārjuna along with the Goddess named Bhramarāṁbikā was worshipped in Śrīśaila[3] by Brahmā for the sake of achieving (the power) to create.

40. On the banks of Suvarṇamukharī Śaṅkara under the name Kālahastī[4] along with Aṁbā named Bhṛṅgamukharālakā was propitiated hy Vyāsa.

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1. Kanakhala—A village two miles to the east of Hardwar (U.P.) Dakṣa's sacrifice was destroyed by Vīrabhadra here.

2. Aṭṭahāsa—On the eastern part of Labhapur in Birbhum District of Bangal.

3. Śrīśaila—Famous Śiva-shrine in the Karnual District of Andhra Pradesh. It is also famous as Śriparvata in old Sanskrit works.

4. Kālahastī—This *Vāyu* (Wind) form of Śiva-Liṅga is on Suvarṇa-

41. At Kāñcī the chastiser of Kāma (i.e. Śiva) stationed at the foot of Ekāmra ('Single Mango Tree') was embraced by Kāmākṣi who was engaged in penance and he became marked with the bangle.

42. There is (a holy place) named Vyāghrapura in the middle of the Tilli forest where Patañjali adores Īśāna in his dancing posture.

43. Formerly the sacred spot named Śvetāraṇya has been spoken of to you by me, where Airāvata regained his broken tusk by worshipping Śiva.

44. I have told you about the holy spot Setubandha.[1] There Rāghava installed the Lord called Rāmanātha who annihilates sins.

45. There is a holy spot named Gataprati where the Bull-emblemed Lord has resorted to the root of a Jambū tree ('Rose-apple') for the sake of protecting the universe.

46. This has been certainly heard by you that the Lord is always present in the holy place named Vṛddhācala near the river Maṇimuktā.

47. The most excellent holy spot named Śrīmanmadhyārjuna[2] has been heard of in which Hara in close association with Gaurī is always present to confer boons.

48. The holy Tīrtha named Somatīrtha[3] has been heard of by you. It is occupied by Somanātha. Those who cast off their bodies there have no further entanglement with the bondage of worldly existence.

49. Indeed you have heard of the holy spot named Siddhavaṭa where Siddhas worship the excellent Jyotirliṅga ('Fiery Liṅga').

50. The holy place named Kamalālaya has been surely heard of by you. It is the place where Śrī was obtained alive by Hari through the worship of Valmīkeśa.

mukhari in the North Arcot District at a distance of a mile or so from Renugunta railway station.

1. The same as Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu.

2. Madhyārjuna—Thiruvidaimarudur—six miles from Kumbhakonam and 20 miles from Tanjore, Tamil Nadu.

3. Somatīrtha—Prabhāsa noted for its Jyotirliṅga; Somanātha in Gujarat.

51. You have heard of Kaṅkādri where Hara is present. For the sake of salvation even now Brahmā and Keśava adore that (Lord).

52. You know the glorious Droṇapura where the Lord of Pārvatī boarded the ship when the ocean got agitated at the end of Kaliyuga.

53. The holy place named Brahmapura[1] has been heard of (by you). It is the place where formerly Indrajit installed Dhūrjaṭi (i.e. Śiva) on the banks of Ārya Puṣkariṇi.

54. You know the holy spot named Śrīkoṭikā where the Moon-crested Lord dispels crores of sins of the persons who propitiate (him).

55. The holy spot Gokarṇa[2] has been heard of. Jāmadagnya (i.e. Paraśurāma) desirous of propitiating Śiva here ceased to wish for heaven.

56. The holy spot Tripurāntaka has been mentioned to you, where the Three-eyed Lord dispels the fear of hells from those who visit him.

57. The holy place Kālāñjana has been mentioned. The Blue-necked Lord dwelling there rids the devotees of the terrible fever of worldly existence.

58. The holy spot Priyālavaṇa has been recounted. There the Lord of Aṁbikā profusely poured out an ocean of milk to Upamanyu who sought milk.

59. The holy place Prabhāsa[3] has been mentioned to you. There the Lord with the crescent moon on his crest was worshipped by Śauri (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) and Sīrin (i.e. Balarāma) and he conferred (on them) inexhaustible benefit.

60. You do know Vedāraṇya[4] where the Lord of Pramathas was earnestly requested previously by Dakṣa who had committed sins, for the grant of salvation.

1. Brahmapura—Garhwal and Kumaon (De 40). But both are inapplicable in the Indrajit-context here.

2. Known as Gokarṇa-Mahābaleśvara in North Canara (Karnatak).

3. Somatīrtha—Prabhāsa noted for its Jyotirliṅga; Somanātha in Gujarat.

4. Vedāraṇya—A forest in Tanjore five miles north of point Calimere in Tamil Nadu (De 28). But in the context of Dakṣa the identification is doubtful.

61. You have heard of the holy spot Hemakūṭa[1] of the Three-eyed Lord. There is no fear from rebirth in the case of men who perform penance there.

62. There is a holy spot named Veṇuvana. It is destructive of sins. There an auspicious jewel of pearl was produced from within the slender stem of bamboo.

63. The holy spot of (Śiva) the enemy of Andhaka named Jālandhara[2] has been heard of by you. There Jālandhara performed penance and obtained the leadership of the Gaṇas.

64. You have known about the boly place Jvālāmukha[3] mentioned hy me. There the Goddess Jvālāmukhi worshipped Kālarudra.

65. There is a sacred spot named Bbadravaṭs. It bas been mentioned (by me) and heard of by you. For the sake of riches Heraṁba (i.e. Lord Gaṇeśa) worshipped the Three-eyed Lord here.

66. The boly place Nyagrodhāraṇya has been mentioned to you, where Ugra (i.e. Lord Śiva) performed the terrific dance called Tāṇḍava and competed witb Kāli.

67. That boly spot named Gandhamādana[4] has been beard of hy you. It is the place where Āñjaneya (i.e. Hanumān) performed the worsbip of Mṛtyuñjaya.

68. The sacred place of Śaṁbbu named Goparvata[5] has been proclaimed by me. There Pāṇini acquired the foremost place among grammarians.

69. Indeed tbe boly spot named Vīrakoṣṭha bas been known (by you). There by means of penance Vālmīki attained tbe status of being the chief of poets.

70. You know the holy place spoken of as Mahātīrtha where all the Devas beginning with Brahmā have been taught by Śaṁbbu.

1. The same as mount Kailāsa (De 115).

2. The same as Jullunder, the headquarter of the District of the same name in Punjab.

3. Jvālāmukhi—A place of pilgrimage 23 miles south of Kangra. Also known as a Śaktipīṭha. The temple of the Goddess is on the Jwālāmukhi hill.

4. In this context a branch of Rudra Himalayas is not improbable though the author's list generally mentions places in Tamil Nadu.

5. Takht-i-Sulaiman mountain near Srinagar in Kashmir (De 129).

71. The holy spot of Maheśvara named Mayūrapura[1] has been mentioned by me to you. Indra performed holy rites and observances there and gained his thunderbolt.

72. The sacred place Śrīsundara[2] on the banks of Vegavati has been mentioned. Even in Kaliyuga the Lord of the Devas shines there.

73. You do know the holy place Kumbhakoṇa[3] of Śaṁbhu. There in the month of Māgha even Gaṅgā presents herself for absolving herself of (all) her sins.

74. The holy spot named Tryaṁbaka[4] near the banks of Godāvarī has been heard of by you. It was there that Guha obtained (his weapon) Śakti that killed Tārakāsura.

75. O sage, excellent among the knowers of the Vedas, the holy place Śrīpāṭala (known as) Vyāghrapura has been mentioned (to you). There Gaṅgādhara was worshipped by Triśaṅku for the sake of sanctifying his birth.

76. The holy place named Kadambapurī has been known by you. For your sake Śaṁbhu injured the god of Death with his trident.

77. The holy spot named Avināśa has been mentioned to you. There the Bull-emblemed Lord became pleased with Paḍikaṇṭha and granted his presence (to him).

78. O sinless one, the holy spot Raktakānana has been mentioned by me to you. Rudra manifested himself and granted boons to Mitra and Varuṇa there.

79. The holy spot Śrīhāṭakeśvara situated in Pātāla has been heard of by you. The son of Virocana (i.e. Bali) worships the Lord there in order to regain his position.

80. You know Kailāsa, the favourite residential place of Lord Śaṁbhu, where (Kubera) the Lord of Yakṣas, who is a

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1. The same as Hardwar (De 129).
2. Madurai which stands on the river Vai-Gai (Vegavati) and not Kāñci as the Śiva thereof is called Ekāmranātha.
3. Kumbhaghoṇa or Kumbhaconum in Tanjore District, Tamil Nadu. There the sacred tank Kumbhakarṇa-kapāla or Mahā-māgam is visited by pilgrims in the month of Māgha (De 107).
4. The famous Śiva shrine in Nasik District near Nasik in Maharashtra State.

perpetual servant of Śiva, devoutly worships the Three-eyed Lord.

81. Thus the abodes and holy spots of Lord Śiva mentioned by me formerly have been known by you also. What more do you wish to hear?

82. Thus the son of Śilāda (i.e. Nandikeśvara) told the leading sage (Mārkaṇḍeya), the son of Sage Mṛkaṇḍu. As he bowed down with devotion at his feet, he took pity on him and touched his head with his hand.

CHAPTER THREE

Mārkaṇḍeya's Further Query

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1. O holy Lord, kindly do not deceive me who am solely devoted to you. Is there any other disciple of yours like me? Your grace alone shall bear witness to this.

2. In the holy spots previously mentioned by you the benefits are separate and different. Mention to me that holy place where all the benefits can be had, O eminent Lord.

3. O preceptor, tell me that (holy spot) merely by remembering which with or without knowledge, mobile and immobile beings can attain salvation.

4. See, Your Holiness are not being requested and propitiated by me alone. It is indeed for this that you have been surrounded by all these sages.

5-20. The following sages eagerly wait for your answer: Pulaha, Pulastya, Vasiṣṭha, Marīci, Agastya, Dadhīca, Nakru, Bhṛgu, Atri, Jābāli, Jaimini, Dhaumya, Jamadagni, Upayāja, Yāja, Bharata, Arvarī, Vān, Pippalāda, Kaṇva, Kumuda, Upamanyu, Kumudākṣa, Kutsa, Vatsa, Varatantu, Vibhāṇḍaka, Vyāsa, Kaṇvariṣa, Kaṇḍu, Māṇḍavya, Mataṅga, Kukṣi, Māṇḍakarṇi, Caṇḍakauśika, Śāṇḍilya, Śākaṭāyana, Kauśika, Śātātapa, Madhucchandas, Garga, Saubhari, Romaśa, Āpastamba, Pṛthu-

staṁba, Bhārgava, Udaṅka, Parvata, Bhāradvāja, Dālbhya, Dānta, Śvetaketu, Kauṇḍinya, Puṇḍarīka, Raibhya, Tṛṇabindu, Vālmīki, Nārada, Vahni, Dṛḍhamanyu, Bodhāyana, Subodha, Hārīta, Mṛkaṇḍu, the highly irate Durvāsas, Jālapāda, Śakti, Kāṅkvārya, Nadanta, Devadatta, Nyaṅku, Suśruta, Agniveśya, Gālava, Marutvān, Lokākṣi, Viśravas, Saindhava, Sumantu, Śiśupāyana, Maudgalya, Pathyacāvana, Mātura, Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, Ekapāt, Krauñca, Dṛḍha, Gomukha, Devala, Aṅgiras, Vāmadeva, Aurva, Patañjali, Kapiñjala, Sanatkumāra, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, Hiraṇyanābha, Satyākhya, Vātāśana, Suhotṛ, Maitreya, Puṣpajit, Satya, Tapaśśāli, Iṣya, Śaiśira, Nidāgha, Utathya, Saṁvarta, Śaulkāyani, Parāśara, Vaiśaṁpāyana, Kauśalya, Śāradvata, Kapidhvaja, Kuśa, Svārcika, Kaivalya, Yājñavalkya, Āśvalāyana, Kṛṣṇātapa, Uttama, Anantakaruṇa, Āmalakapriya, Caraka, Pavitra, Kapila, Kaṇāśin (or Kaṇada) as well as Nara and Nārāyaṇa.[1] There are other celestial sages too. They are eager to hear your answer to my question. You are being looked up to (for the answer).

21. You are worthy of being considered as the head of the devotees of Maheśvara. You have gone over all the worlds. Therefore you instruct and guide us.

22. It is directly by you that we have been instructed well prior to this, O Lord. What else can be relevant here?

23. The divine Āgamas and Purāṇas are to be understood. For that either Parameśvara or Kātyāyani or Lord Skanda or Your Holiness should be seen (i.e. approached).

24. If we have devotion unto you, if you have mercy towards us, it behoves you to open up this secret and bless us with your favour.

25. Thus Nandikeśvara was entreated by the son of Mṛkaṇḍu with humility and profuse smile on the face. He told Mārkaṇḍeya who was the greatest among the devotees of Śiva and who acquired perfection of the body from Śiva pleased formerly by his devotion:

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1. The list of sages given here in vv 5-20 is to appeal to Nandikeśvara to describe Aruṇācala, as a galaxy of great sages is eager to listen. Not that all these were contemporaries, but the Purāṇa presumes it.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Greatness of Aruṇācala

Nandikeśvara said:

1. O sage, you have been addressed in that manner hy me in order to test your mental calibre. If I do not narrate it to you, to whom else is it to be narrated?

2. Is there any other person like yon devoted to the holy cult of Śiva in this world? Though you were originally destined to be short-lived, you have become immortal hy means of your devotion.

3. On behalf of whieh other persons did the Lord become angry and control Yama who executes his orders by afflicting Yama with the big toe of his foot.

4. You alone understand all the tenets of Śaṅkara's eult along with their secrets. Though yon appear to be perplexed and whirling like Time, you are very mature in your mind.

5. Only by you am I served for a very long time. By whom else have I been served so long? For whom have I so much love as for you?

6. I shall instruct yon about that holy place along with the injunctions regarding the pious observance of the same. They must he comprehended devoutly hy all those who desire salvation through devotion.

7. If the preceptor does not make his diseiple contented by means of instructions when he asks with great respect, he is a bad preceptor.

8. Have full eoncentration of your mind. Have permanent faith in this esoteric feature of Parameśvara that is being imparted hy me.

9. Remember the Lord who put an end to the god of Love. Meditate on (Goddess) Śaṅkarī and salute her. Repeat the Oṁkāra in a low tone. It fetches you great welfare.

10. There is in the Southern Region, O ascetic, in the land of Draviḍas, a great sacred placed named Aruṇa associated with the Lord with the crescent-moon for his crest-jewel.

11. It extends to three *Yojanas* (i.e. 36 kms.). It is worthy

of being adored by Śivayogins. Know it to be the heart of the earth, attractive and thrilling to Śiva.

12. There the Lord Śaṁbbu himself has assumed the form of a mountain. He has the name Aruṇācala. He is conducive to the welfare of all the worlds.

13. He is the residence of all Siddhas, great sages, Devas, Vidyādbaras, Yakṣas, Gandharvas and celestial damsels.

14. He is worthy of being honoured by great sages more than Sumeru, the Supreme Mandara and even Kailāsa, since he is Lord Parameśvara himself.

15. Heaven-dwellers who have been deceived because of tbeir residence in beaven desire to (change places with) the creatures on that mountain, because they can get salvation without any effort.

16. Even the divine Kalpa trees are not equal to the trees on that mountain, because they worship Hara on tbe mountain everyday by means of leaves, flowers and fruits.

17. Even hunters solely fond of violence have become infinite in form because they have the benefit of circumambulation.

18. Tbe clouds that roam about in the region of tbat mountain and closely cling to its peaks know themselves to be superior even to Himālaya with Gaṅgā (flowing over it).

19. Even the birds and the bamboos on that mountain have very sweet voice. It is with very great difficulty that a place is obtained by Yakṣas, Kinnaras and Gandharvas (there).

20. In the beginning of the night in the dark half of the lunar month glow-worms hover round there and attain the region of those who perform the rite of ceremonious waving of the lights to the Lord.

21. (*Defective Text*) (Trees etc.) that grow on the banks of tbe rivers of that mountain and have without obstacles embraces (witb the mountain) entertain (so much) pride of (their conjugal) fortunateness that they underesteem Goddess Aparṇā.

22. The stars coming into contact with the lofty peaks of that mountain congratulate themselves on getting a status equal to that of the Moon.

23. All the deer that regularly wander about on the

ridges of that mountain look with contempt at the deer that is fond of his hand.[1]

24. The hunters who usually move about near the foot of that mountain resemble Nikumbha and Kumbha (attendants of Śiva) without any effort (of performing penance).

25. Of what use is much talk? The trees growing on that, the animals and the hunters there are envied by Gaṇeśa and Skanda.

26. The lions, tigers, and elephants on that mountain that cast off their bodies at the proper time are certainly honoured by Śambhu in the form of Śoṇādri (Aruṇācala) because they give him his robes.

27. The mountain named Bhāskara is seen on the east of this mountain.[2] Stationed there Indra serves the Śoṇaparvata always.

28. There is a certain mountain on the west named Daṇḍādri. Varuṇa goes to that mountain and serves Aruṇaparvata.

29. To the south of Śoṇādri there is the mountain Amarācala. For the sake of serving Śoṇādri Kāla (i.e. the god of Death) occupies its tableland.

30. In the northern direction shines the mountain Triśūlādri, the caves of which are occupied by Siddhas and which is protected by Śrīda (i.e. Kubera).

31. Other Guardians of the Quarters station themselves on the ridges of other mountains lying at the outskirts of that mountain.

32. All the mountains always supported by this mountain acquire more greatness than through propitiation.

33. When this Lord of mountains is seen, the joy of Menā and Himālaya increases greatly on account of their kinship with it.

34. Through a hundred thousand sprouts of the trees he

1. In one of the mental representations of the figure (*Dhyāna*) of Śiva he is represented as having a deer, an axe in each of his two hands and the other two hands express freedom from fear (*Abhayamudrā*) and conferment of blessings (*Varamudrā*).

2. VV 27-31 state the names of the deities occupying the hills on the four directions of Aruṇācala.

appears as though he is wearing matted hair.[1] Though this form of Śaṁbhu is immobile, he is mobile like Īśa here.

35. The Moon and the Sun are on either side of the peak of fiery and watery nature. Hence, this mountain displays to the world that it has three fiery eyes.

36. During rainy season blue clouds settle beneath its peaks. Therefore this mountain appears to bear the Kālakūṭa poison in its throat.

37. It is the Lord of mountains. It is not only mentioned as having a thousand feet and a thousand heads but is also so visible directly.

38. It is no wonder that formerly the currents of the celestial river got caught on its head. This Lord of mountains has even today the groups of many rivers held amidst its (several) peaks.

39. In autumn when clouds reach a place a little away from its tableland and ridges, it appears like an excellent bull on which a powerful bull has mounted.

40-43a. It is not by mere designation but by coming into contact with the tips of the peaks (of the mountain) that he (i.e. Lord Śiva) is *Nīlalohita* ('Blue-red'). It is due to immobility (of the mountain) that he attained his name *Sthāṇu*; and due to his impenetrability that he came to be called *Bhīma* and his designation *Ugra* is due to inaccessibility.

(Even) the insignificant reptiles resorting to its ridges rival with leading Serpents beginning with Takṣaka, Ananta etc.

From its eight corners this mountain manifests its riches and powerful glory, thereby clearly signifying that it is Aṣṭamūrti himself ('eight-bodied' Śiva).

43b-47a. The two rivers Yeṇyā (?) and Śakti are the tubular vessels of Iḍā and Piṅgalā on the peak of Śiva (i.e. Aruṇācala). The river Kamalā in the middle is Suṣumnā.

Brahmā and Viṣṇu in the forms of Swan and Boar were not able to see its top and root as it stood in the form of a massive column of refulgent fire.

1. VV 34-47a describe how mountain Aruṇācala resembles—nay is—veritable Śiva in form.

On being requested by them Śaṁbhu came to be present there with the name Aruṇācalanātha along with the Pramathas (i.e. attendants of Śiva).

The eminent Yogin Gautama performed severe austerities there for a thousand successive years and made Sadāśiva appear before him.[1]

47b-51a. Formerly the daughter of the Snow-clad Mountain performed penance there and secured the left side of the body of the delighted enemy of god of Love (i.e. Śiva).

The Liṅga named Pravālādrīśvara installed by Gaurī there bestows worldly enjoyments on men. It is conducive to the attainment of salvation. At the bidding of Gaurī Durgā, the slayer of Mahiṣa, has appeared there. She grants unimpeded accomplishment of Mantras to good people. There in the hermitage of Gaurī there is a new Tīrtha named Khaḍgatīrtha. If men take their bath therein even once, it destroys the five types of great sins.

51b-56a. The Liṅga named Pāpanāśana that had been worshipped by Durgā is conducive to the destruction of all sins merely by bowing to it once. [*Defective text*] King Vajrāṅgada[2] who had plenty of wealth (lost it) due to his transgression of duties (and he came there and worshipped). He once again (got it) on account of the greatness of the devotion. He attained *Sāyujya* with Śiva.

Only by circumambulating that (mountain) Kāntiśālī and Kalādhara,[3] the leading Vidyādharas, became liberated from the bondage of the curse of Durvāsas.

There is no greater holy place other than Śoṇādri. There is no greater Mantra than the five-syllabled Mantra (*Namaḥ Śivāya*). There is no cult (greater) than the cult of Maheśvara. There is no god greater than Maheśvara.

There is no better knowledge than the realization of Śiva. There is no Veda greater than Śrī Rudra.

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1. VV 47a-56 describe who derived what blessing by serving Aruṇācala.

2. For the story of King Vajrāṅgada vide *infra* Chs. 22-24.

3. For the story of the Vidyādharas Kāntiśālī and Kalādhara see *infra* Ch. 23.

There is no greater leader of the devotees of Śiva than Viṣṇu. There is no greater protective factor than the sacred ash.

56b-59. There is no greater good conduct than the practice of devotion. There is no greater preceptor than the person who makes the amulet (of Śiva). There is no better ornament than the Rudrākṣa head. There is no better scripture than Śivāgama. There is no greater leaf of a tree than the *Bilva-patra* ('Aegle Marmelos'). There is no greater flower than Suvarṇaka (i.e. flower of messua Roxhurghii?). There is no greater happiness than detachment. There is no higher region than salvation. Neither Meru nor Kailāsa nor Mandara are on a par with Aruṇādri. Those are abodes extended over mountains; this is Giriśa himself.

60-61. When the son of Śilāda told thus, the son of Mṛkaṇḍu became joyous in his mind. Again he bowed to him many times. His mind had become bewildered on account of the worldly existence. He submitted thus: "What are those acts which cause birth of men in the worldly existence? Which of them are ordained (by Śrutis) as leading to hell? What remedial actions can one perform? How (are they done)? May it be narrated to me."

CHAPTER FIVE

Rewards and Punishments Resulting from Previous Karmas[1]

Nandikeśvara narrated:

1. A person endowed with pure *Sattva* quality is very rare in this world. Men endowed with *Rajas* and *Tamas* qualities are easily available.

2-5. On account of his meritorious habits and conduct a man

1. The object of the chapter is to deter people from committing unsocial acts. By the way, it sheds light on the tortures meted out to people in those days.

of *Sattva* nature shall attain liberation from *Saṁsāra*. According as there are different varieties of *Karmas* whose fruits are to be reaped Narakas (Hells) of diverse kinds have been created by Brahmā in different places.

Due to the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter a person falls into the hell *Mahāraurava*. After his residence in the hell he is reborn as an ass, a dog, a pig or a Cāṇḍāla. On drinking wine a twice-born (*dvija*) person, as a result of this action, is confined to the hell called *Raurava* for a long time and comes to (i.e. is born in) the species of worms, insects and birds.

By stealing the property of a Brahmin one attains the state of a Brahmarākṣasa.

6-9. In the next birth one will be wanting in those things one steals in this birth.

A person who defiles the preceptor's bed undergoes torture for a long time in the hell *Asipatravana* and then is born as a eunuch.

A person who commits adultery falls into the hell named *Kālasūtra*. He is tortured by means of heated iron rods by the servants of Yama.

He who commits arson falls into the hell *Ghora*; he who administers poison (falls) into the hell *Sughora*; a backbiter, in the hell *Mahāghora*; he who reviles and censures piety and righteousness falls into (the hell called) *Arci*. He who had been treacherous to friends will stay in the hell *Karāla* and he who is greatly fond of violence falls into the hell *Bhīma*.

10. He who commits great sins in secret falls into *Saṁhāra*; speakers of falsehood, into *Bhayānaka*. He who wilfully damages wells, fields etc. and abducts men and others shall stay in *Asighora*.

11. One who is engaged in harassing others falls into the hell *Vajra*. O Brahmin, a person who eats meat falls into *Tarala*; he who maliciously ill-treats his parents falls into *Tīkṣṇa*; he who censures *Japas* falls into *Tapana*.

12. A person who kills a horse falls into *Nirucchvāsa*; a person who kills a cow stays in *Dāruṇa*; the destroyer of a foetus shall stay in *Caṇḍa* and he who kills a woman stays in *Kukūlaka*.

13-14. He who takes away the property of gods (in a

temple) stays in *Dahana*. He who takes away the wealth of others stays in *Ghoraghora*.

The messengers of Kṛtânta (god of Death) in the hells tie all the sinners with nooses and cords, belabour them with rods and pierce them with spikes.

15. Herons with sharp iron(-like) beaks, great serpents with ruthless curved teeth, terrible hounds, tigers and other wild animals bite them. (The servants of Kâla) cut them to pieces by means of weapons and burn the bodies too.

16. They dig deep pits and put them therein. They heat them with whips; they are cooked and fried in troughs of oil and they are pricked with fine needles.

17-18. Sinners are made to bear heavy burdens by the messengers of Yama.

A Brâhmaṇa-slayer shall be (reborn as) as a tuberculosis patient. A drink-addict will have dark teeth. A thief of gold will have had nails. He who defiles the preceptor's bed will have skin diseases. One who is malicious towards the preceptor and other elders shall have epileptic fits. He who censures the Vedas shall become a Cāṇḍāla.

19. A person guilty of perjury shall have disease of the eyes. He who hurries to take food ahead of all shall have gastric trouble. He who steals learning shall become dumb and a thief of books shall become blind.

20. One who runs after other men's wives shall become lame. One who censures others shall be deaf. One who does not maintain good conduct shall be a pig rolling in filth and a thief shall inherit diseases of the tongue.

21. One who neglects a visiting guest shall have stinging pain in the cheeks. One who engages himself in sexual intercourse during *Parvan* days shall have urinary disease. One who eats forbidden foodstuffs shall have putrid mouth.

22. A person who transgresses the bounds of decency shall become a slave; a person who wantonly spoils lakes and parks shall become an ass; a person who promises something but does not give it will be short-lived; a swaggerer shall become a dog.

23. A person with malice towards Viṣṇu shall become a lizard and one who is malicious to Śiva shall become a mouse.

24. Thus, one should know the result of sins and then perform expiatory rites.

25. The atonement should be scrupulously performed in the holy spot of Aruṇa by God-fearing pious people.

On hearing thus the many kinds of torture and pain to be undergone by perpetrators of crimes he fell at his (i.e. Nandikeśvara's) feet again and again and requested for the means of suppressing them.

CHAPTER SIX[1]

Expiatory Rites

Nandikeśvara said:

1. I shall narrate in detail now the means of expiation for all great sins. Have a faithful mind and listen attentively.

2-4. A Brāhmaṇa-slayer should go to Śoṇādri and take his holy bath in Khaḍgatīrtha. He should apply sacred ash and wear Rudrākṣa beads. He should then constantly repeat the five-syllabled Mantra (*Namaḥ Śivāya*).

He shall regularly observe fasts. With great purity of mind, he should worship Parameśvara. He should feed Brāhmaṇas. For a year he should eat only what he receives by way of alms. He shall keep all the sense-organs under check. He should render pious and devout services to the Lord and perform special worships. He shall be liberated from the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. He shall become honoured in the world of Brahmā.

5-6. One having committed the sin of imbibing liquor should stay in the holy spot of Aruṇācala for a year. He should perform everything as in the case of the previous sinner. He should then worship Maheśvara. He shall bathe the Lord (i.e. the Liṅga) with

1. This chapter deals with the rites of expiation to atone for sins described in the last chapter. Here the importance of Aruṇācala in purging off sins is emphasized.

milk repeating *Śatarudrīya Mantra*. Immediately he is liberated from the sin originating from drinking liquor.

7. One who has stolen gold should worship Lord Hara with the leaves of Bilva ('Aegle Marmelos') in the sacred spot of Śoṇa (i.e. Aruṇācala). Then he shall feed Brāhmaṇas. He shall be liberated from the greatest of sins.

8-10. One who has indulged in sexual intercourse with the preceptor's wife should go to Aruṇācala on a day marked by the constellation Kṛttikā. He should carry out all rites and observances as before. He should propitiate Śrī Śoṇācala Śaṅkara for three months with a thousand lights. He should then offer a well-adorned virgin to an intelligent Brāhmaṇa. He should repeat everyday the six-syllabled Mantra (*Oṁ namaḥ Śivāya*).

He shall then be liberated from the sin. He shall stay in the world of Śiva as long as the terrestrial world lasts. There is no doubt about this.

11-12. A person who has abducted another man's wife should stay in this holy spot for a month with perfect restraint on the sense-organs. He should worship Aruṇaśaṅkara with fresh flowers. He should give to a devotee of Maheśvara money according to his capacity. At that very moment he will be liberated from that sin.

13. A person who has administered poison should perform holy observances as before in the sacred place of Aruṇācala and offer milk as humble gift to the Lord. He shall be liberated from the sin.

14. A backbiter too should perform all holy observances in the holy spot of Aruṇācala. The man should be devoted to the Vedas. He shall teach prominent Brāhmaṇas. Thereby he shall be free from sins.

15. A person who has committed arson also should, as before, carry out all holy observances and perform holy rites in the holy spot of Aruṇa for three months. He should get a house built and give it to a devotee of Śiva. This shall be conducive to the removal of the sin.

16. A person who has reviled at piety and devotion should stay for a year in the holy spot of Śoṇa doing all (the previous) observances. For the sake of expiating the sins he should perform *Satra* ('sacrifice') etc. in accordance with his capacity.

17. One who has been bostile toward one's parents should stay in the holy spot of Aruṇa for a month wakefully. He shall offer thousands of cows to Giriśa and also to Brāhmaṇas.

18. At the time of eclipse (?) he shall feed many Brāhmaṇas. Then he shall let loose a dark-coloured bull. Thereby he shall be absolved of the sin.

19 One who has killed a woman or a child should go to the holy places of Śoṇa (i.e. Aruṇācala). At the time of *Vyatipāta* (i.e. a particular astronomical period foreboding calamity) he shall offer gingelly seeds to Brāhmaṇas for the sake of dispelling sins.

20. One who has committed sins in secret should stay in the holy place Śoṇa with perfect curb on the sense-organs. He should then make charitable gifts in secret. He shall then be rid of his sins.

21. A liar should stay in the sacred place of Aruṇācala for six months observing religious vows. By reciting the prayers to the Lord of Aruṇācala he shall become sinless.

22. One who has wantonly damaged wells etc. should go to the holy spot of Śoṇa with great devotion. He should cause lakes to be dug there. Certainly he shall (thus) become sinless.

23. One who has illegally taken possession of (agricultural) land should dedicate a very fruitful field unto the Lord. A person who has spoiled a park should offer an excellent park unto the Lord.

24. A person who has taken away bouses illegally should build a new temple of the god. He shall become free from the sin and attain *Sāyujya* with Śiva.

25. A person with malicious intention towards otbers should stay in the holy spot of Śoṇa. He should please devotees of Maheśvara with money. Thereby be shall undoubtedly attain the great worlds (i.e. beaven).

26-29a. A person who has eaten the meat of cow and other animals should stay in the holy spot of Śoṇa for three fortnights and perform holy observances and rites. He should propitiate Aruṇeśāna with charming good gifts. He should loudly call out three times, "O Lord of Śoṇācala". He shall be sinless thereby.

A person desirous of salvation shall stay in the holy place

Aruṇa and worship Aruṇeśvara. He should repeat the *Mantra* of Aruṇeśvara with great respect.

If anyone wishes for[1] anything he should circumambulate Aruṇācala on foot. He shall obtain auspiciousness immediately.

29b-31. When one sneezes, falters and slips, sees a bad dream or is highly delighted or if a great danger is imminent, the learned man should utter the name of "Aruṇaśankara".

If a person has fallen away from the discipline of castes and stages of life, or one has actively engaged in hostile acts against Śiva, he should stay in the holy place of Aruṇa for three days. He shall be liberated from the sins. This is the terrestrial Śivaloka. This is the embodied form of the Chief of the Vedas.

32-37. This Aruṇa mountain is the southern Kailāsa. In the other *Siddhakṣetras* (i.e. holy spots for spiritual achievement) men achieve *Siddhi* only through penances, but in this holy spot it is obtained merely by remembrance. Let the comparison be thought over.

All the holy rites of men performed at Śoṇakṣetra are superior to the rites performed at Prayāga and Kāśī on Gaṅgā or at Puṣkara or at Setu. A learned man shall perform *Agniṣṭoma*, *Vājapeya*, *Vairāja*, *Sarvatomukha*, *Rājasūya* and *Aśvamedha* at Aruṇācala.

If a man observes a fast for a single day at Aruṇakṣetra, it is as good as performing a hundred *Cāndrāyaṇas* or ten thousand *Sāntapanas*.

The sixteen great *Dānas*[2] (i.e. charitable gifts) performed at Aruṇakṣetra yield twice the benefit mentioned in *Kalpas* (i.e. literature on rituals).

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1. *abhihita* can be interpreted as meaning 'spoken' and the verse then means 'whatever has been *spoken* regarding a person' etc.

2. The sixteen Mahādānas (Great Charitable Gifts) are as follows:
(1) Tulā-puruṣa (Weighing a person against gold or silver which is then distributed among Brahmins)
(2) Hiraṇya-garbha
(3) Brahmāṇḍa
(4) Kalpavṛkṣa
(5) Go-sahasra
(6) Kāmadhenu (or Hiraṇya-Kāmadhenu)
(7) Hiraṇyāśva
(8) Aśvaratha
(9) Hastiratha

38. On hearing directly from Nandikeśvara (the foregoing advices) regarding the (measures of) prevention from falling into hell, he (i.e. Mārkaṇḍeya) rejoiced and thanked him. He further requested him to give the details regarding days, seasons, years, deserving persons and the order and other things.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Holy Rites for Special Attainments

Nandikeśvara said:

1. If anyone worships the Lord of Śoṇādri on a Sunday with red lotuses, he will surely acquire great imperial magnificence.[1]

2. If anyone worships the Lord of Aruṇādri on a Wednesday with musk and Karavīra flowers ('Nerium odorum'), he shall live happily in Satyaloka.

3. If anyone worships the Lord of Śoṇa with white lotuses on a Thursday, he will dwell in Janaloka for a long time along with Siddhas.

4. If anyone worships (the Lord) with Campaka and Jasmine flowers on a Friday, he shall attain Tapoloka and will be eulogized by Brahminical sages.

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(10) Pañca Lāṅgala
(11) Dharādāna
(12) Viśvacakra
(13) Kalpalatā
(14) Saptasāgara
(15) Ratnadhenu
(16) Māhābhūta-ghaṭa (vide MtP, Chs. 274-289)

The list is a bit different in LP II.28ff. The term *'Mahādānāni'* occurs in Mbh, *Āśramavāsi* 5.15 and also in Hāthigumphā inscription of Kharavela (2nd cent. B.C.). These show the antiquity of this tradition.

1. VV 1-5 describe the good results of worshipping the Lord of Aruṇācala on different weekdays. One or two verses are probably missing as we do not have the mention of Monday and Tuesday in this list.

5. Even a great sinner will never go to the world of Yama if he propitiates Lord of Aruṇa on a Saturday with Jāti (Jasmine) flowers.

6. If anyone offers milk pudding as an humble gift to the Lord on the *Prathamā* (i.e. first *tithi* or day of the Lunar fortnight), he shall possess ample wealth and foodgrains.[1]

7. If anyone offers cooked rice mixed with curd with great devotion on the *Dvitīyā* (i.e. second *tithi*), he shall become fortunate, excellent and imbiber of Soma juice certainly.

8. If anyone offers *Apūpas* (i.e. sweet pies) and propitiates Śoṇeśa on the third day, his health will never be impaired as long as his physical body lasts.

9. If anyone offers a pile of full pitchers etc. to the Lord of Aruṇa on *Caturthī* (i.e. fourth *tithi*), his desires will be fulfilled.

10. Cooked rice mixed with green gram should be offered as gift to Śoṇeśvara with devotion on the *Pañcamī* day (i.e. fifth *tithi*). The devotee thereby becomes one with inexhaustible affluence.

11. If anyone offers devoutly cooked rice with jaggery to Śaṁbhu in the form of Aruṇācala on *Ṣaṣṭhī* (i.e. sixth *tithi*), his line of descendants will never be extinct.

12. If anyone offers cooked rice with gingelly seeds to Śoṇeśa on *Saptamī* (i.e. seventh *tithi*), he shall get rid of his indebtedness withont any effort even if he is very poor and wretched.

13. If anyone offers cooked rice from *Rājaśāli* variety of paddy to Śaṁbhu in the form of Śoṇaśaila on the *Aṣṭamī* day (i.e. eighth *tithi*), royal people will be won over by him without service as a courtier.

14. If anyone offers cooked wheat to the Lord of Śoṇādri on the *Navamī* day (i.e. ninth *tithi*), tuberculosis and other diseases will never affect him.

15. If anyone offers flour or meal mixed with curd to the

1. VV 6-21 describe the benefits derived by worshipping Aruṇācaleśvara on various *Tithis* ('Lunar days') by offering certain articles of food as *Naivedya*. The list gives us a variety of vegetarian food-articles in vogue at the time of the Purāṇa—the various articles of rice show a rice-growing area as the locale of the Purāṇa.

Lord of Śoṇa oa tbe *Daśamī* day (i.e. tentb *tithi*), he will always be a favourite of all the worlds.

16. If anyone offers beaten rice-flakes as gift to the Lord of Aruṇācala on the *Ekādaśī* day (i.e. eleventh *tithi*), he shall be free from fear from everywhere.

17. If anyone offers cooked rice with pulses to the Lord of Śoṇa on the *Dvādaśī* day (i.e. twelfth *tithi*), his desires (will be fulfilled) without any impediment.

18. If aayone offers fried flour of barley to Aruṇeśa on tbe *Trayodaśī* day (i.e. thirteenth *tithi*), he shall have no fatigue and his mind shall never be excited and agitated.

19. If anyoae offers different kinds of fruits to Śoṇanātha on tbe *Caturdaśī* day (i.e. fourteenth *tithi*), he shall become eloquent and learned, even if he had origiaally been a dullard.

20. If anyone offers fruit of a jack-tree to the Lord of Śoṇādri on the Full-Moon day, he will never bave diseases of the eye.

21. If anyone offers devoutly bulbous roots etc. to the Lord of Śoṇācala on the New-Moon day at a confluence, the Manes will be pleased with him.

22. Oa the day of *Aśvini* star a devout man sbould offer clothes to Aruṇeśa. On the day of *Bharaṇī* one should offer ornaments also to Aruṇeśa.[1]

23. On the *Kṛttikā* day lights should be offered. On the *Rohiṇī* day one shall offer silver. On the *Mṛgaśirsa* day sandal paste and on the *Ārdrā* day yellow sandalwood should be offered.

24. On the *Punarvasu* day musk shall be offered. One shall offer camphor on the *Puṣya* day, saffron on the *Aśleṣā* day aad ice water on the *Maghā* day.

25. Betel leaf should be offered on the *Pūrvāphālgunī* day and incense on the *Uttaraphālgunī* day. On the *Hasta* day one should offer black aloe-wood and on the *Citrā* day *Yakṣakardama* (i.e. an oiatment ia whicb sandalwood, musk and other tbiags are mixed).

1. VV 22-29 give the list of articles to be offered to the Lord of Aruṇācala on the various constellations (accompanying the Moon). The list starts with Aśvini and not with Kṛttikā as in older Purāṇas. Obviously this shows that it was composed after the 4th cent. C.E.

26. On the *Svātt* day collection of *Suvāsints* (i.e. good perfumes?) should be offered. On the *Viśākhā* day a chowrie; on the *Anurādhā* day an umbrella studded with pearls; on the *Jyeṣṭhā* day herds of cows should be offered.

27. On the *Mūla* day one shall offer pearl necklace; on *Pūrvāṣāḍhā* a crown; gems and jewels on *Uttarāṣāḍhā*; and on *Śravaṇa* one should offer excellent seat.

28. On the *Dhaniṣṭhā* day a devotee should offer gold. *Vāsaḥ* (clothes or an abode) shall be offered on the *Śatabhiṣak* day. Various articles of enjoyment shall be offered on the *Pūrvābhādrapadā* and horses on the *Uttarābhādrapadā* day.

29. On the *Revatt* day one should offer a golden chariot to Śoṇaśaṁbhu. A man should offer all these things only after performing the great *Pūjā* ('worship').

30-31. The Lord of Aruṇa should be particularly worshipped in the different *Rāśis*[1] ('signs of zodiac') beginning with Meṣa ('Aries') with flowers in the following order: Sinuvāras ('Vitex Negundo'), Kurabaka ('Red Amaranth'), Kakubha ('Terminalia Arjuna'), Pāṭala ('Trumpet flower'), Kuṭaja (Wrightia dysenterica'), Nīpa flowers ('Ixora Nauclea Cadamba'), Jivantī ('Cocculus cordifobis'), Mallikā (a variety of jasmine), Saroruhas ('Lotuses'), Damanakas ('Artemisia indica'), Nandyāvartas ('Tabernaemontan coronaria') and Saroruhas (i.e. Lotuses of another variety).

32-34. During the Solar and Lunar eclipses a devotee should piously bathe the Lord with *Pañcāmrta* repeating the five-syllabled *Mantra* of Śoṇanātha. During the two *Ayanas* (i.e. transits of the Sun) the deity should be bathed with *Pañcagavya*. The rite of bathing with *Gavya* shall be performed along with the recitation of) the six-syllabled *Mantra*.

During the two equinoxes the bathing rite of the Lord of Aruṇācala should be devoutly performed with milk repeating *Praṇava* ('Oṃ').

35. It is better to worship the Lord of Śoṇādri in the forenoon

1. VV 30-46 list the flowers to be offered on different Signs of Zodiac beginning with Meṣa ('Aries') and also on various occasions, e.g. transits of the Sun, special days in certain months or various occasions (good or ominous) in one's life.

with Rudratulasi, in the midday with *cassia fistula* and in the afternoon with jasmine.

36. During the *Parvan* of *Ardhodaya* ('rising of the Moon') Śaṁbhu in the form of Śrī Śoṇācala shall be bathed with the waters of a thousand pitchers uttering *Śatarudrīya Mantras*.

37. On the Śivarātri day a devotee shall keep awake and have perfect control over the sense-organs. He shall worship the Lord particularly with clusters of three leaves of *Bilva* or lotuses or Karṇikāras (i.e. flowers of cathartocarpus fistula).

38. For the sake of salvation one shall worship Maheśvara on the Śoṇaśaila by means of songs, instrumental music and dances in accordance with the injunctions of the divine Āgama.

39. In the month of Pauṣa one shall perform the Āgneya festival of the Lord with fresh cooked rice with pickles and side dishes. A learned devotee should utter the *Vyāhṛtis*.

40. On the Viśākhā day in the month of Vaiśākha, a devotee should perform the *Damanaka* festival of the Lord of Śoṇācala in accordance with the Śivatantra.

41. The *Prābodhika* festival shall be performed in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. The devotee should perform the great worship of Śoṇaśaila after reciting Sāman hymns.

42. One shall worship the Lord of Śoṇādri in accordance with the injunctions of the Āgamas during the following occasions: *Pradoṣas* falling on Saturdays, *Ārdrā* days, *Vyatīpātas*, during *Parvans* and on Sundays and Mondays.

43. With great devotion one should perform special worship of Śoṇanātha on the following occasions: days of initiation, sacred thread ceremonies, marriages, birth of a son and such other occasions.

44. On one's own birthday, during joyous occasions as well as in adversities, when some danger is feared, at the time of exit and entries etc. Aruṇeśvara should be worshipped.

45. When a multitude of holy saints comes, when one's feet are fettered (?), at the acquisition of new prosperity and glory, when enemy marches against one or when one marches against enemies—on all these occasions one should worship Aruṇeśa.

46. If one is far off, one shall remember Śiva; if one is in the neighbourhood, one shall visit Śiva; and if one stays in the holy spot of Aruṇa, one shall worship Śiva three times a day.

47. What else do you say, O dear one? It is being proclaimed by me with the arm raised up that there is no other place than the holy place Aruṇa capable of (bestowing) heavenly pleasures and salvation.

48. The holy spot of Śoṇa instantaneously and adequately sanctifies the mind on being remembered, the ears on being listened to, the eyes on being visited and the tongue on being glorified.

49. By the embodied souls who have taken birth in this great holy spot enjoyment of pleasures is obtained as long as they are alive and liberation when they cease to live.

50. Through the *Śrāddha* rite performed here even those persons who die elsewhere attain salvation despite their being sinners.

51. The holy spot of Aruṇa excels Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā, Kāśī, Kāñcī, Avantī and Dvārakā.[1] There is no doubt about it.

52. When the son of Śilāda said thus, the son of Mṛkaṇḍu said once again: "O noble one of honourable repute, I still ask you about the greatness of this. Tell me more of it."

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Description of Creation

Nandikeśvara said:

1. I think a great burden (i.e. responsibility) has been placed on me, O Mārkaṇḍeya, by you who have asked for (a description) of the greatness of Aruṇācala in detail.

2. It is quite appropriate, O highly intelligent one, that your

1. These seven towns are regarded as *Mokṣa-dāyakas* ('giving salvation to its residents or to one dying there'). And Aruṇācala is superior to them.

mind is overcome by curiosity. One who does not know the (glorious) story of the Lord of Śoṇādri is a brute.

3. How can the greatness of celebrated prosperity of Śaṁbhu who is devotedly attached to Śoṇācala be described completely even by those who know it?

4. Even if it is heard, how can it be completely comprehended and retained in memory even by the most exceedingly intelligent ones on being overwhelmed by the emotion of wonder!

5. Now remember the wonderful account of the activity of the enemy of the god of Love. My mind is really dancing with the experience of the nectar supreme.

6. My intellect is unable to describe completely the wonderful conduct of Śiva which is fascinating to the utmost.

7. Still in accordance with my intellect, I shall describe it, a very small part of it. Let the meritorious greatness of the Lord of Śoṇādri be listened to, O sage.

8. Formerly, at the beginning of the Kalpa of the Primordial Lord, Maheśvara, the supreme being without any false notion and above doubt, conceived the entire universe by means of his own will and produced it.

9. Desiring a perpetual arrangement for the creation and protection of that universe generated (by him), the primordial Lord created Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

10. The Three-eyed Lord created Parameṣṭhin (i.e. Brahmā) from his right side. The Lord created Viṣṇu from his left side.

11-12. He endowed Brahmā with *Rajoguṇa* and Viṣṇu with *Sattvaguṇa*. Employed by the Lord of the Devas, both of them, i.e. Viriñci (Brahmā) and Acyuta are capable of carrying out the functions of creation and protection of all the worlds. Brahmā created ten sons mentally, the Brāhmaṇas beginning with Marīci.

13-14. He created Dakṣa from his right thumb. Brahmā engaged them in the work of creation. The Lotus-seated Lord himself created Brāhmaṇas from his mouth, Kṣatriyas from his arms, Vaiśyas from his thighs and Śūdras from his feet.[1] Asuras and the Suras were born of Kaśyapa, the son of Marīci.

15-18. Maruts, serpents, vultures, Gandharvas, celestial damsels and Manu also were born. The progeny of Manu exists

1. Cf. RV X.90.12; AV 196.6.

as Mānavas ('human beings'). They were grouped into different classes. They perform different jobs and duties. Two types of race were born of Atri, viz. that of sages and that of Kṣatriyas. Yakṣas and Rākṣasas were born of Pulastya and Pulaha.

Utathya, Gīṣpati and others were born of sage Aṅgiras. Agni as well as the sages beginning witb Cyavana were born of Bbṛgu. Great sages were born of Vasiṣṭha and others. This entire universe is filled with his sons and grandsons.

19. Tbus Brahmā filled this universe with his progeny. Due to lapse of time and also due to his prosperity and glory he forgot Maheśvara.

20. Acyuta married the daughter of Bhṛgu (i.e. Lakṣmī) who was having her abode in the Lotus. He incarnated on the earth in the form of fish etc. He did not remember Īśvara.

21. When the functions of creation and sustenance became their independent activities, Brahmā and Viṣṇu became exceedingly arrogant. Which man does not become proud on account of his authority and influence?

CHAPTER NINE[1]

Dispute between Brahmā and Viṣṇu

Nandikeśvara said:

1. Born of delusion, there arose a dispute between Brahmā and Viṣṇu who became exceedingly proud, each thinking 'I alone am the Lord'.

1. The chapters 9-15 deal with the episode of the manifestation of Śiva as a Column of Effulgence to show the subordinate position of Brahmā and Viṣṇu to him and the final transformation of the Column of Fire into mount Aruṇācala. The story is the same as described in *Pūrvārdha*, chs. 1 and 2 of this Māhātmya. But here the story is retold in a more interesting and poetic way. The Ketaki Bunch was pressurized by Brahmā to give false evidence that Brahmā saw the top of the Fiery Column and is exposed. Finally Brahmā repents and eulogizes Śiva.

2. With the *Rajas* element predominating in him and showing (itself) externally like *Nīla* (i.e. Poison) the creator of the universe, Brahmā, said to Viṣṇu with great arrogance:

Brahmā said:

3. How can you be superior, O Viṣṇu, to me, the creator? I am the grandfather of all the worlds. Why are you so much deluded?

4. O ignorant Keśava, you boast that you are *Daityāri* ('Enemy of Daityas') by killing Madhu and Kaiṭabha born of your own self.

5. Even now my hands have not had relief from the pain due to the strain in creating you everyday in diverse ways, because I am the creator.

6. A great ocean has been formed out of my perspiration. You sink in it. Had it not been for the holy fig tree, you could not have got any support.

7. In the great ocean created by me a certain serpent floats. You are having that as your support. There is a Lotus above you and that is my seat.

8. Tell me how there can be any rise of *Sattvaguṇa* from you who are full of *Tamas*? Do you know *Prakṛti*, you who are full of stupor and dullness due to sleepiness?

9. O Janārdana, how can the three worlds that are under me be protected by you who sleep in a vast sheet of water due to fear from Daityas.

10. The Vedas have issued forth from my four faces (i.e. mouths). Sarasvatī, the *Śakti* in the form of consciousness, is my wife.

11. Indeed this universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings is created by me. That is being protected by my sons and grandsons beginning with Indra.

12. Hence, O Viṣṇu, you are only one among my employees. Tell me how you excel me, for I am the Lord of all the worlds.

Nandikeśvara said:

13. When Brahmā in wrathful impetuosity began to speak harshly in this way, Nārāyaṇa smiled maliciously and spoke:

Viṣṇu said:

14. O Brahmā, leave off your impetuous turbulence. Indeed you swagger in vain. Understand that you are born of the Lotus that has come out from my navel.

15. Had I not formerly abandoned my Yogic slumber and killed Madhu and Kaiṭabha, you would have been slain by them in the same manner.

16. Out of my own will for slaying Daityas, the chief of whom was Somaka(?), I assumed the forms of a fish etc. Which other person was the cause of the creation thereof?

17. Persons whose vision is clouded by *Rajoguna* do not see anything (clearly). What could be possibly surveyed or scrutinized by you who are full of *Rajoguṇa*?

18. My *Śakti* who resides in the Lotus is inseparable from me. The three worlds prosper solely because of her benign side-glance.

19. All these elements, this Kâla, everything belongs to me, the Ātman. Is there anything in the three worlds bereft of me?

20-21. Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, the Guardians of the Quarters and Manus—I am all these. Consider that the three worlds Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ and the three Vedas are dependent on me.

It is due to my own will that the *Śakti* of creation itself is able to stay. Hence are you elder to me or even equal to me who am the Lord of the three worlds?

Nandikeśvara said:

22. As the two with delusion blinding their minds were wrangling mutually, a great deal of time passed by. Events began to occur as in the period of ultimate destruction.

23. There was neither the setting nor the rising of the Moon and the Sun. The stars, the constellations and the planets became feeble.

24. No winds blew. No fires blazed. Neither the firmament nor the earth nor the quarters shone.

25. All the oceans were agitated; the mountains quaked; the medicinal herbs became dried and all the creatures became weary and distressed.

26. The regularity in the occurrence of fortnights, months,

seasons, years and other units of time was upset. Even the arrangement of night and day became ruined.

27. The Guardians of the Quarters beginning with Indra, the great sages beginning with Marīci—all these thought that the end of the *Kalpa* had started untimely.

28. When a great upheaval like this occurred, the Lord of Bhūtas (i.e. Śiva) was prompted by the cries of all living beings. He understood that the universe had become merged in *Avidyā* (*Māyā*).

29. The soul of the universe, the Lord inclined to protect the universe, saw with his inner vision the cause of the delusion of those two.

30-33. He thought thus: 'Exceedingly arrogant, these two have forgotten me, their master, the bestower of all prosperity and glory. They think themselves to be the Lords of the universe.

Alas, (see) the height of ignorance! These two, Brahmā and Acyuta, know me fully well. Yet they are behaving arrogantly thus. A person whose mind and eyes have become blinded by the darkness of ignorance generally does not see an object presented or shown to him.

Though these two have committed offences, though they are submerged in the ocean of ignorance, they should not be neglected by me with a desire for the welfare of all the worlds.'

34. Deciding mentally like this, the Lord, the great ocean of mercy, desired to remove the helplessness of those two due to *Māyā*.

35. Wonderful is the compassion of the Moon-crested Lord. It is naturally obtained in all the three worlds. He manifested himself and Brahmā and Viṣṇu were removed from the middle of the ocean of delusion.

CHAPTER TEN

Manifestation of the Fiery Liṅga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1. Intimate to me, O holy Lord, how Śaṁbhu, the eternal Lord, blessed Viṣṇu and Brahmā who were blinded with delusion.

Nandikeśvara narrated:

2. Listen. I shall relate everything in detail in the manner it occurred: what the Lord who is compassionate towards devotees did out of tenderness (to them).

3. There arose between those two wranglers a mass of refulgence in the form of a Column (of Fire) filling up the chasm between heaven and earth.

4. As it increased in size and pierced the cosmic egg, it appeared as though the exceedingly dark-blue firmament was raised upward.

5. Due to the splendour of the Fiery Liṅga everything all round became pale. The quarters shone suddenly as though they were extended far off.

6. It appeared as though the oceans were dried up by its exceedingly fierce and huge flames. The billows subsided and their agitation became reduced. They attained their original nature.

7. Like some sparks emanating from that Fire-column, planets along with galaxies of stars shone as before in the firmament.

8. Due to its red splendour all the mountains appeared to be painted with red chalk. They attained the splendour of Mars and the rising Sun.

9. As the aquatic animals were illuminated due to the close contact of its refulgence, the oceans appeared to be formed and shaped by means of rocky slabs of ruby.

10. The trees shone as though fresh grown clusters of corals had hung on them. The rivers shone as though they were full of full blown Kalhāra flowers.

11. The earth appeared to be smeared with saffron. The quarters were covered with red lead as it were. The sky all round was seen to be completely pink in colour.

12. The top lid of the Cosmic Egg was completely filled with its splendour like the skull (in the hand) of the Hide-robed Lord (Śiva) filled with blood.

13. On account of that Column of Fire that increased in size thus the entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings assumed redishness in appearance.

14. On seeing that wonderful Liṅga of Fire, the Four-faced and the Four-armed Lords abandoned their mutual anger. They thought thus to themselves:

15. 'Has the Mass of Splendour of the rubies on the hoods of the serpents beginning with Śeṣa pierced through the earth and come up?

16. Or have all the twelve Suns that commonly appear at the end of a *Kalpa* risen up simultaneously in between the sky and the earth?

17. Or have the streaks of lightning after being scattered due to clash of clouds commingled together in the middle of the sky and begun to fall on the earth?

18. This (Mass of Refulgence) dazzles and so diminishes the power of the eyes every moment by means of its lustre. All the other elements have been made to appear as though they are not different from itself. This Refulgence has been going on increasing.

19. Although this is dazzlingly brilliant, it does not scoreh. Unlike the fire, it does not burn the living beings nearby.

20. By the transmission of the splendour of this Mass not only the universe but my body also has attained a red colour. How wonderful!

21. From whom has this come out? What is its root? What is its place of origin? What is its base? By which power does it shine?

22. What is its extent all round, sideways, above and below? How far has it gone down deep into the nether worlds?

23. The mind is constantly eager to know all this. It appears to fly up in the sky and penetrate deep into the nether worlds.'

24. Thinking thus with great keenness on account of the sight of the Column of Fire, both of them, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, became eager and anxious.

25. With great pride Govinda looked at Brahmā with smile spreading over his lotus-like face and spoke:

Viṣṇu said:

26. O Brahmā, we both desire (to prove our) superiority over each other. As a matter of fact, this has come into existence like a test (of our superiority).

27. Certainly it is not possible for either of us to know (both) the beginning and the end of this Mass of Splendour of incomprehensible nature.

28. If either of us finds out the root or the top of this Self-born Splendour, he is the superior of us. He is the Lord of the worlds too.

Nandikeśvara said:

29. Thus both of them resolved in their minds to find out the root and the top of that exceedingly great Mass of Splendour. They rivalled with each other in their attempt for the same.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Viṣṇu's Exploration of the Lower Part of the Liṅga

Nandikeśvara narrated:

1. Thereupon, Brahmā assumed the form of a swan capable of crossing the path of (i.e. flying high up in) the sky. "I shall see his top", said he and made attempts for the same.

2. Viṣṇu of strong physical body assumed the form of a boar having the capacity to penetrate through the earth as easily as though he was at a play.

3. He was eager to return after finding out its root. His hair upon the body was erect as though it were artificial(?). With his curved teeth he broke through the earth.

4. Keeping his face downward that great boar began tearing off the ground by means of his snout. Thereby he appeared as though he was bowing down to the Column of Splendour.

5. He was extremely enthusiastic; he filled the whole of Pātāla with his grunting sound (hitting the ground) with his hard chest playfully. Thus he began to enter Pātāla.

6. Wherever he entered, the disguised boar (i.e. Viṣṇu who had assumed the form of a boar) saw the very same Column of Fire standing in the same manner (as before).

7. From the hole in the ground that was torn up some serpents such as Śeṣa etc. were seen (coming out) like the shoots of that Fiery Column.

8. The primordial Tortoise that was stationed as the bulbous root of the Golden Mountain as well as its support was seen by Acyuta.

9. Nearby, at the ankle of the earth, the Elephants of the Quarters were seen stationed as bearing the burden. On account of their rut they were moving slowly yet gracefully.

10. By the enemy of Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) that frog also was seen—the frog on whose back the entire sphere of the earth was established.

11. Adhokṣaja (i.e. Viṣṇu) saw that supporting *Śakti* also, by whose blessing Śeṣa, Kūrma ('Tortoise') and others are capable of bearing the burden.

12-13. The Lotus-eyed Lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) saw all the seven Pātālas, viz. Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Nitala, Talātala, Pātāla, and Mahātala in due order. With great wonder he saw all the residents of that place with diverse shapes and sizes.

14. He went beyond the city of the son of Virocana (i.e. Bali) named Bhogavatī. He went deeper into the other abodes of the Daityas deeper down in caves.

15. 'Oh! It is seen. Oh! It is seen.' So thought Mādhava in his mind regarding the root. Like a person of immature mind he continued the search with his curiosity increasing (at every step).

16. The boar penetrated far beneath the ocean, but the Column of Refulgence was seen just as before unaffected and unaltered.

17. Only the earth was rent and split; the ocean was shaken and stirred; but the root was not seen by Viṣṇu in the form of a boar.

18. After having wandered thus with extremely agitated

mind (for thousands of years) Viṣṇu who had playfully assumed the form of a boar did not succeed in seeing its root.

19. With bis hoofs bent and broken, with his curved teeth pounded and crushed, with his body injured and shattered and with his snout impaired and fractured, that boar underwent a great deal of strain.

20. With fatigue he began to gasp for breath. His original pride that had been unrestrained finished instantaneously along with his desire to search for the root of the Column of Refulgence.

21. Though his vow had not been fulfilled, he was eager to return. But the Lotus-eyed Lord was not able to take even a single step.

22. Due to fatigue his eyes became blind. He was caught in the middle of Pātāla. But that Refulgence itself showed him the path.

23. With great difficulty he came out of the boundless ocean. But the boar in disguise (i.e. Viṣṇu) became drowned in the ocean of profuse sweat.

24. The continuous lustre of the Fiery Column dragged him up as if by means of a rope. Janārdana returned with great difficulty to the immobile forest.

25. 'Since the root of this Storehouse of Splendour has not been seen by me, the top region also could not at all have been seen by the Creator (i.e. Brahmā).

26. I shall turn back and go to that place where previously this Mass of Splendour first manifested itself. I shall then seek refuge in Śiva.

27. Indeed, he alone is far superior to all. Since that Lord had been forgotten by me with my eyes blinded with delusion, such a great calmity as this has taken place with evil consequences.'

28. Deciding thus, the Lotus-eyed Lord got rid of his arrogance and returned to that place where that Column having excessive refulgence manifested itself.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Brahmā's Exploration of the Top of the Column of Splendour

Nandikeśvara said:

1. Then proceeding along the Column of Fire, Brahmā flew up speedily in the sky that has no support.

2. As he flew up rapidly the excess (of clouds) hit by the fluttering wings became scattered as though dispelled by winds.

3. Flying rapidly to a great height, he could not be seen clearly by the eyes. Only a very (vertical) long line was seen in the sky.

4. The *Māyāmarāla* (i.e. Brahmā who by his Māyā assumed the form of a swan) near the Column of Refulgence appeared like the moon going along and near the evening clouds.

5. At the outset he went beyond the path of the birds, then beyond the path of the clouds, thereafter the path of the aerial chariots, and then the orbit of the stars.

6. This bird in disguise (i.e. Brahmā) rapidly crossed all those lofty abodes of the luminaries going upwards.

7. The speed of wind and mind of very subtle nature, shape and size was kept down (i.e. surpassed) by that swan while going.

8. The higher up he flew with the weary wings, the higher and higher appeared the Column of Refulgence.

9. After going beyond the seven pathways of the seven categories of winds he was dismayed much as he saw the Column burning and breaking through the semispheroidal top of the Cosmic Egg (and still higher up).

10-14a. He thought thus: 'How will it be possible for me to stand in front of Hari who might have seen the root? (Proud of his success) Śauri (i.e. Viṣṇu) will not cease to keep his head turned away (from me) in a crooked manner.

Of what avail are my vital airs, though they be of long duration, since I have not fulfilled my vow? What shall be the proper thing to do now? What should be done? What help is there? I wish to deceive Viṣṇu. Who will help me? I am not at all capable of defeating my opponent through a straightforward course. One who cannot use a straightforward means should fraudulently sur-

pass the opponent. Indeed honour is an asset unto great men.' So thought Brahmā and became agitated in his mind. At that time something bright and pure was seen in the sky not very far away.

14b-17. Brahmā began to doubt like this: 'Is this the outline of the moon? But how can it come here? Or is it a lotus stalk? That is in the river. How can it be in the sky?' While he was doubting thus, it came very near. It was recognized as a Ketaki leaf (Pandamus odoratissimus) by the Lotus-born Lord. Though it was an old one it had much fragrance because of its inherent power. Brahmā caught hold of that Ketaki bunch. The moment it was caught it became alive and conscious. It spoke.

Ketaka said:

18. Oh, why do you catch hold of me? Leave me off. I am inclined to take rest after having flown through the sky a hundred thousand years.

Nandīśa said:

19. On seeing his fatigue increasing in that manner, Brahmā became grieved. The Lotus-born Lord thought with a disappointed mind.

20-21. Since his vow had remained unfulfilled, he even stooped to despicable means: 'Where is this Mass of Refulgence that has filled up the entire space in between heaven and earth? Where am I whose manliness has been finished (i.e. humiliated) in the course of this test? My wings seem to be breaking. The eyes have become blinded. All the limbs appear to be crumbling down. I seem to fall down headlong.

22. Of what use is much talk on other topics? My vital breath appears (as if) coming out along with the wind exhaled now.

23. Let this knot of excessive pride snap and be dispelled from my mind. Let that unhealthy rivalry with Viṣṇu be terminated quickly.

24-27. This Fiery Column it as lofty as it was ever before. In girth it is far more than the intervening space between heaven and earth. Neither Nārāyaṇa nor I can be the cause thereof. The possibility of the other Suras—the chief of whom is Mahendra—being so is still remote. I have no strength to fly up beyond this place, so I return.'

So decided Brahmā within his mind. With some surprise he asked (the Ketaka Leaf): "Who are you? Whence are you coming?" That Ketakī Leaf replied to Brahmā:

28. "I have (all along) been a bunch of Ketakī leaves. At the bidding of Śiva I remained on the head of Śaṁbhu of the form of the Column of Refulgence. I am sentient and conscious.

29-30. I have come down from there with a desire to stay in the terrestrial world."

On hearing these words of the Ketaka Bunch, the Lotus-born Lord got some relief. He asked it (i.e. Ketaka Bunch): "You do tell me how far is the top of the Column of Refulgence from here."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Brahmā Requests the Ketaka Bunch to Perjure

Nandikeśvara narrated:

1-4. The Ketaka Bunch laughed and spoke to him again:

The Ketaki said:

O foolish one, you don't know anything? Who are you? Whence have you (come)? Who is competent to know the dimensions and magnitude of that (Lord) round whom crores of Cosmic Eggs like this one, have been attached? Since I first began to fall off ten thousand sets of four *Yugas* have elapsed. Even now the middle of that (Column of Refulgence), i.e. the earth has not been reached.

As the Bunch of Ketaka spoke these words, the Lotus-born Lord bowed down to it. Giving up all his pride he spoke with palms joined in reverence:

Brahmā said:

5-6. O noble-souled Ketaka Bunch, it is true that I have been a stupid fellow. I, Brahmā, had a great rivalry with Viṣṇu. The greatness of Śiva had been forgotten by both of us. Merely

because of (our ability of creation and protection of the universe) both of us were puffed up with excessive pride.

7. Even now I am not free from the rivalry with the Garuḍa-emblemed One. But let this shameful talk be left aside.

8-12. Friendship is said to be *Sāptapadīna* ('formed when two people have walked together seven steps or talked together seven words'). So you do give up unworthy thought. It behoves you to do me a favour. Both Viṣṇu and I had been blind due to delusion. On seeing the Column of Refulgence, we wanted to dispel the notion of our equality (and decide as to who is superior). So we assumed the forms of a boar and a swan. He was desirous of finding out the root? I do not know as to what stage he has reached. But this is the plight of mine who am desirous of seeing the top (of this Column of Fire). A thousand years have passed since I first began to fly. I have become so utterly exhausted that I find as though I am parting with my life-breath. Fortunately, I have got you as the support of those who become frustrated.

13. Hence grant this request of mine who am your friend. I am your friend and companion because of mutual conversation. I am your slave because of your association with me.

14. I have folded my palms in reverence (to you). This request (of mine) should therefore be carried out by you. If he (i.e. Viṣṇu) sees (i.e. happens to see) the root (of the Column of Fire), I am defeated by him.

15. Or if he does not see, it comes to this that I am equal to him. Both these (alternatives), O friend, cause great shame to me.

16-20. The avoidance of this situation (that would arise) is to be managed by you alone. For the sake of a friend utter a befitting lie; speak a word in front of the Discus-bearing Lord. "This Brahmā in the form of a swan has been to the highest point (of the Lord) in the form of the Column of Refulgence. I bear witness unto the same. This Pitāmaha (i.e. Brahmā) has been greatly honoured by that Moon-crested Lord who has assumed the form of a Column of Refulgence, as though he was his father. Hence, O Viṣṇu, he alone is superior to you." Let this great help be rendered to me by you by kindly stating this.

Nandikeśvara said:

21. Thus the Ketakī Bunch was repeatedly entreated by Brahmā. Being overwhelmed with kindness (to Brahmā), he told every word of what Brahmā had requested to Viṣṇu who was near the Column of Refulgence.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Manifestation of Śaṅkara

Nandikeśvara said:

1. Endowed with common sense and discrimination, he (i.e. Viṣṇu) looked at Brahmā smiling twice over and came to the conclusion that the top (of the Column of Fire) had not been seen by him.

2. He thougbt: 'That Lord of Devas alone is competent to bless me, the immature, innocent one and to break the pride of this Brahmā. He is the protector and Lord of all living beings.

3. Due to my inability to see the root of the Column of Refulgence, I think, my pride and arrogance has disappeared and devotion to the Three-eyed Lord has been generated.

4. Since I am rid of haughtiness, that Maheśvara is being eulogized now, that Lord from whose right and left limbs we were born.

5. The pride of Brahmā has not been eradicated till now. Therefore, he has got a false witness. Thus Brahmā desires to deceive me.

6. Therefore, now that Śaṅkara alone should be sought as a refuge by me, because he is competent to dispel all miseries.

7. Except him (i.e. Śaṅkara) who else can be the protector of one who has perpetrated an offence, is ungrateful and malicious towards the elders? I shall eulogize (that) Śaṅkara.'

Viṣṇu prayed:

8. Be victorious, O Lord, with the forms of *Pṛthvī* (i.e. ele-

ment earth) and *Āpaḥ* (i.e. water). Victory to you, O Lord, in the form of Prabhākara (i.e. the Sun). Be victorious, O Lord, in the form of Amṛtakara (i.e. the Moon).

9. Be victorious, O Lord, in the form of Vaiśvānara (i.e. the fire). Be victorious, O Lord, in the form of the bearer of smell (i.e. the wind). Be victorious, O Lord, in the form of *Hotṛ* (i.e. the priest who performs sacrifice); be victorious, O Lord, in the form of Ether.[1]

10. Protect me, O Lord, who are beyond the three Guṇas; save me, O Lord, with the body of *Kāla* (i.e. Time or Death). Save me, O Lord, with inexhaustible prosperity; save me, O merciful one.

11. You are the creator of all the worlds, the protector of all embodied beings. Excepting you who else is the annihilator of all living beings?

12. You are the minutest of all minute things. You are the greatest of all great ones.[2] You alone occupy this universe both internally and externally (i.e. are both immanent and transcendent to the world).

13. The *Nigamas* are your breaths. The universe is the magnificence of your craftsmanship. You belong to your own self and knowledge is your Ātman, O Lord.

14. The immortal ones, Dānavas, Daityas, Siddhas, Vidyādharas, human beings, living beings, birds, mountains and Śikhins (i.e. peacocks etc.)—all these are you alone.

15. You are the heaven; you are salvation; you are *Oṁkāra*; you are *Adhvara* ('sacrifice'). You are the Yoga-practice. You are the supreme consciousness, O Īśvara. What is it that you are not?

16. You are the beginning, the middle, and the end of all mobile and immobile beings. Assuming the form of Kāla, you measure the entire universe.

17. The one greater than the greatest, the chastiser, the Lord, blesses all. How shall this Śiva, Dhūrjaṭi, be directly visible to me?

18. It is by seeing him and seeking refuge in him that one

1. VV 8-9 describe the eight forms ('aṣṭa-mūrtis') of Śiva.
2. Cf. *Kaṭha Up.* I.2.20.

attains salvation. Or I shall eulogize that Refulgence that has occurred here in accordance with my intellect.

19. On hearing it the Lord with ears all round shall become kind.

After deciding thus Lord Viṣṇu began to eulogize.

20. Viṣṇu bowed down to that Column of Refulgence as Parameśvara, considering him as the Lord of the universe, the Lord devoid of beginning, middle and end, though he was forcibly prevented by Virifica (i.e. Brahmā) smilingly.

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

21. Be victorious, O Lord Mahādeva, O bull-emblemed Vāmadeva, O destroyer of god of Death, O destroyer of the sacrifice, O blue-throated one, O Lord with the moon as the crest.

22. Be victorious, O Śaṁbhu, O Śiva, O Īśāna, O Śarva, O three-eyed one, O Dhūrjaṭi, O enemy of god of Love, O enemy of the (three) Puras, O Sthāṇu, O Bhava, O Maheśvara.

23. Be victorious, O Īśa, O Khaṇḍaparaśu, O trident-bearing one, O Paśupati, O Hara, O omniscient one, O Bharga, O Bhūteśa, O skull-bearing one, O Nilalohita.

24. Be victorious, O Rudra, O Pināka-bearing one, O Lord of Pramathas, O holder of Gaṅgā, O Vyomakeśa, O Giriśa, O Parameśvara.

25. Be victorious, O Bhīma, O hunter of deer, O Lord wearing hides, O storehouse of mercy, O Lord having fire as semen virile, one who dwells on Kailāsa perpetually.

26. It is at your behest that the Wind blows, the Serpent (i.e. Śeṣa) bears the burden of the earth; the Sun and the Moon shine and the Cosmic Egg floats in the ocean.

27. All the luminaries move about in the sky. O Lord, everything happens at your bidding. Brahmā and I are competent to create and sustain the universe.

28-31. After creating (everything) you contribute to its nourishment; the earth gives birth to the plants; the oceans do not overflow the boundary. All these are (instances of) your greatness.

Great *Siddhis* such as minuteness etc. are the greatness (in

you), not common to others. How can I neglect you who are eulogized hy the Immortal Ones and others?

When we are devoid of worries, we forget you and remember you during difficulties. You entertain no anger towards the devotees. You are always gracious unto them.

When you cover up the desire to grant devotion, men are deluded and suffer bondage. When you grant them devotion, they have enlightenment and get salvation.

32. On being eulogized like this by the Discus-bearing Lord with palms joined in reverence, the Lord of Paśus (i.e. individual souls), the storehouse of mercy appeared, though the Lotus-born One was deriding as he was haughty.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Brahmā Prepares to Eulogize Śiva

Nandikeśvara said:

1-6a. Bursting asunder the Column of Refulgence, the Lord manifested himself and was seen hy both of them. He resemhled the moon that breaks through the evening cloud and appears (in the sky). He was seated on a lordly hull white like the peak of Kailāsa. He had matted hair on his head with the (digit of the) rising moon as the crest. He wore a garland of skulls of demons and (also) of *Āragvadha* (Cassia Fistula). He had five faces all having serpents as ear-rings, eyes shining on the hroad fore-heads and throats having the stain of poison. All the faces were bright. He held in his hands a trident, a skull, a *Ḍamaru* (drum), a deer, an axe, a bow, pure Khaṭvāṅga (i.e. skull-topped club), a sword and a serpent. Ash was sprinkled all over his hody. The elephant-hide served as the upper garment for him. He was adorned with all ornaments. He was eulogized hy all the Devas. He wore a tiger's skin as his cloth. He was seen by them thus.

6b-8. On seeing that form of Bliss the Lotus-eyed Lord

danced. Unable to understand anything, the Lotus-born Lord became confounded.

With his eyes indicating pleasure Maheśvara congratulated Viṣṇu and with an angry sound of *Huṃ* he lifted up the Four-faced Lord.

9. He said thus: "On account of pride due to your authority both of you had become vain and puffed up. You need not feel ashamed at this. This is the usual way of persons in authority.

10. After observing (critically) my greatness Hari became enlightened but not so in the case of this Lotus-born One who is of deceitful mind and is vicious.

11. When I was laughed at for having five faces, he was chastised. Then he indulged in sexual dalliance with his own daughter and he was punished by me.

12. How can this third offence be endured? Therefore, let there not be any installation of Brahmā anywhere.[1]

13. This Ketaka Bunch gave false evidence. Never again hereafter shall it be placed on my head."[2]

14. After cursing those two Giriśa spoke affectionately to Viṣṇu:

Śrī Maheśvara said:

15-16. O dear one, do not be afraid. I am pleased with you who are endowed with devotion. Indeed you are born of my person. You are particularly *Sāttvika*. As before you are the foremost among the devotees of Maheśvara all over the world. Henceforth you will never be deficient in devotion to me. Devotion that increases every moment is conducive to salvation.

17. When the Three-eyed Lord granted his blessings to Hari who was devoid of pride and equipped with devotion, Brahmā became frightened. After making due obeisance and bowing down he began to eulogize.

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1. The legend explains why Brahmā-worship is not popular. But the curse is not so much effective, as we do find temples of Brahmā not only at Puṣkara (Rajasthan) but in South India also.

2. This part of the legend explains why Ketaki is not used in the worship of Śiva.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Description of the Temple of Aruṇācala by Brahmā and Viṣṇu

Brahmā said:

1. O Lord of Devas, by whom can your glory and supernatural power be comprehended without your blessing which is easily accessible only through good fortune?

2. Words have no makers. Your supreme glory is faultless. It is not possible to eulogize you. They salute (you only) from a distance.

3. Who is Viṣṇu? Who am I? Who are these Guardians of the Quarters beginning with Indra? You alone, O Lord, are the cause of creation and preservation of the universe.

4. O Lord of Pārvatī, you are *Pati* (i.e. overlord). All of us are *Paśus* (i.e. animals, individual souls). You alone are competent to bind us with *Pāśa* ('noose') or to liberate us (from *Saṁsāra*).

5. You are of the nature of the twenty-six principles.[1] You pervade all. O Īśvara, who is intelligent enough to ascertain your real nature?

6. O Lord, you are indeed a *Kirāta* ('Hunter'). With the help of the *Āgamas* as hounds, you indulge in the pastime of hunting in order to kill the wild animals, viz. the *Ṣaḍvarga* ('the six bad qualities', e.g. anger, lust etc.).

7. O Lord, formerly in the course of the sacrificial rite of Dakṣa Vīrabhadra reprimanded and punished us in different ways at your bidding.

8. O Lord, you assumed the form of *Kālāgni* ('destructive fire at the end of the world') to burn down the entire Cosmic Egg. I have nourished and nurtured the god of Love and my intellect generally feels ashamed of it.

1. The 26 principles (*Tattvas*) are as follows: 1-5 elements, 6-10 objects of senses; 11-15 ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose; 16 mind; 17 soul; 18 Puruṣa; 19 Prakṛti; 20 Mahat; 21 Ego (Ahaṁkāra); 22 Mouth, 23 Hand; 24-25 Organs of discharging urine and faeces; 26 *Jīva* (Individual Soul)—Tr.

9. Jalandhara[1] who was guilty of an offence, was pierced and torn asunder by you by means of your trident. Antaka (i.e. god of Death) and Andhaka, a Daitya, were also (similarly punished). Who can be an opponent unto you?

10. If you had not retained the Kālakūṭa poison in your throat, how could we have sustained our lives?

11. Formerly, in the Devadāru ('Himalayan Cedar') forest, you assumed the guise of a knave. You stirred up and excited the sages exclusively devoted to the path of Karman and later blessed them on account of your kindness.[2]

12. If you had not attacked and kicked with your foot the exceedingly terrible evil spirit of *Apasmṛti* ('Oblivion'), this entire universe would have been overwhelmed by it and would have been plunged in darkness.

13. If you had not revealed your half-woman-half-man form, how could I have proceeded with the activity of creation of the universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings?

14. With great wrath, O Śaṁbbu, the arm of the conqueror of Jaṁbha (i.e. Indra) was kept stunned and paralysed by you. For long it remained rigid like the column of your victory!

15. After filling the skull of the mendicant with his own blood and lifting him up with a spear Hari swooned. Remember this.

16. If out of sympathy you had not instructed and trained him in wielding all the weapons and missiles, how could the son of Jamadagni (i.e. Paraśurāma) have taken revenge, though he was exceedingly furious?

17. If you had not killed Nṛhari (Man-lion) by assuming the form of a Śarabha (i.e. a fabulous eight-footed animal) alone, he would have destroyed the universe like Hiraṇyakaśipu.[3]

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1. Jalandhara—A mighty Asura king who kept Viṣṇu captive but Śiva killed Jalandhara and released Viṣṇu.

2. Śiva demonstrated the highest stage of a Pāśupata Yogi by unpopularising himself in Dāruka-Vana. De (p. 53) identifies it with Aundh.

3. Brahma-purāṇa (149.50) supports this end of Nṛsiṁha but Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas like Viṣṇu, Bhāgavata are silent about such end of this Viṣṇu-incarnation.

18. In the ocean at the end of the *Kalpa* you were the boatman who dragged Hari in the forms of Fish, Tortoise, Boar and Man-lion after binding him with the king of serpents for cords.

19. When (the heap of) a thousand lotuses was short by one, the enemy of the Daityas (i.e. Viṣṇu) concluded (your) worship with one of his eyes (as the wanting one-thousandth lotus). O Trident-bearing Lord, you gave him the discus Sudarśana and satisfied him.

Nandikeśvara said:

20. On account of his eulogy and the prayer of Viṣṇu, Dhūrjaṭi became pleased and permitted him to resume (his) creative activity.

21. He ordained the worship (of Brahmā) by Brāhmaṇas in the sacrificial assemblies. With great affection, the Moon-crested Lord spoke to both of them:

Śrī Śiva said:

22. My dear ones, do not be haughty hereafter due to ignorance. Remember me, your sire. Be watchful in the activities of creation and protection.

23. Since I have blessed you both in this place, let this holy spot be competent to give liberation to men.

24. In regard to the men staying at this holy spot to the extent of three *Yojanas* (i.e. 36 kms.), at my bidding, let them have *Sāyujya* form of liberation even without the requisite initiation.

25. Or, may all the embodied souls, mobile and immobile beings here, have the spontaneous knowledge leading to salvation.

26. Let men have salvation by means of the vision (of this place) from afar or by means of recollection (as) the perfect knowledge enshrined in the Vedānta cannot be achieved without great effort.

27. Let this perpetual and immobile Fiery Form of mine, famous as Aruṇādri, be present here forever.[1]

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1. The Purāṇa claims, Aruṇācala is not only the place of the Column of Refulgence but of Śiva's transformation into a hill.

28. Even at the close of the *Yugas* the great oceans shall not submerge it, the winds shall not shake it and the fires shall not burn it.

29. This Liṅga is of the nature of refulgence. Let it not be merged with the luminaries. In the course of their transit inward and outward, let the heavenly bodies move round it.

30. Should I wish to bless any creature, let it be born here. At the time of death let it be competent to attain liberation without the words (i.e. teachings) of the Upaniṣads.

31. Let this holy place be the bestower of salvation on men of evil, sinful souls, through obeisance, if they are far off, and through circumambulation, if they are nearby.

32. The abodes of noble-souled men shall invariably be here. Hence you shall never leave off this holy spot and go.

33. Shall there be salvation by staying anywhere else after disregarding Śoṇācala? Hence, O Brahmā, O Hari, both of you reside here permanently.

Nandikeśvara said:

34. After bowing down to the enemy of the god of Love who said thus, Brahmā and Viṣṇu intimated to him (as follows) with all their haughtiness receding to the background:

Vidhi and Mādhava (Brahmā and Viṣṇu) said:

35. If it has to be so, O support of the universe, let this mountain remain as the support of this universe. But this brilliance is unbearable.

36. Hence it is better, O Rudra, that its refulgence be like that of an ordinary mountain.[1] Let it stand with indivisible (i.e. perfect) greatness. Let it be the great mine of salvation.

37. It discloses its own inherent brilliance and refulgence for the sake of the prosperity of this universe once every year in the month of Kārttika at the close of the day of the constellation Kṛttikā (i.e. on the full-moon night).

38. Although, at your bidding, O Lord, the Śoṇādri is the

1. In public memory some volcanic eruption of the mountain in days gone by has transformed itself in this legend.

bestower of happiness on men, it cannot be worshipped by any devotee on account of its huge size.

39. Hence, beginning from today at our request our Lord should be present in the form of a *Liṅga* on the ground over the tableland of this (mountain).

40. We too shall worship that Lord of Aruṇagiri by means of ablutions, application of unguents and other forms of service in accordance with the injunctions.

41. Here there are (the following trees): *Kesaras* (Rottleria tinctoria), *Cūtas* (Mango trees), *Nāgas* (Mesua Rox burghii), *Punnāgas* (Mallotus philippinensis), Āragvadhas (Cassia Fistula), *Kurabakas* (a kind of Barleria), *Mālūras* (Feronia Elephantum) and *Pāṭalas* (Trumpet flowers).

42. O Lord of Devas, you must be present here itself, O storehouse of mercy, since by worshipping you we shall attain further firmness in our devotion to you.

43-44. Otherwise our minds cannot be pure even when your Lordship are pleased thus. There is a sufficiently lofty place on the east of Śoṇādri. It shall be conducive to the cessation of the primordial *Avidyā* perpetually. That alone will be a delightful befitting abode of the Lord.

45-46. The Vedas with their ancillary subjects, Dharmaśāstras, Purāṇas, Śivāgamas—all these were composed by you and promulgated to us by you, O Bhava. For the sake of the welfare of the devotees, for the sake of their liberation the twenty-eight *Āgamas* designated as *Śaivas* have been narrated by you alone in the form of preceptor.

47. Among them which procedure shall we follow in worshipping you, so that, O Śaṅkara, we shall never suffer from the agony and distress born of ignorance.

Nandikeśvara said:

48. The Lord of the daughter of the Mountain, the embodiment of kindness, then said thus to Brahmā and Viṣṇu who resorted to his lotus-like feet:

Śrī Mahādeva said:

49. O gentle ones, what is proper has been spoken (i.e. asked by you). It has been desired by me (to say) also. You two deserve to worship me by the method described in the *Kāmika* (*Āgama*).

50. I think, due to delusion the *Śaivasaṁhitā* has been forgotten by both of you. Now let it shine once again in your hearts by my favour.

Nandīśa said:

51. After saying thus to Viṣṇu and Brahmā Giriśa vanished. Then there appeared a certain auspicious *Liṅga* there.

52. On seeing it Mukunda and the Lotus-seated Lord (i.e. Brahmā) experienced a great surprise. Bowing down repeatedly with great pleasure, they worshipped and eulogized it for a long time.

53. They caused a temple of the Lord of Śoṇagiri to be built by Viśvakarmā and a multitude (of other craftsmen). It was a wonderful temple with a variety of ornamental architecture.

54. For the sake of the ablution of the Lord they caused a sacred lake to be dug there. It was fresh and full of (the water of) all the (other) *Tīrthas*.

55. Nearby they built a city named Aruṇa for the sake of spiritual achievement. On getting this Dhūrjaṭi does not yearn even for Kailāsa.

56. In that city Brahminical sages, Devas, Gandharvas and celestial damsels, Siddhas, Vidyādharas and Yakṣas became citizens.

57-59. The *Tīrthas* and the rivers beginning with Gaṅgā assumed forms of wells. The heavenly parks beginning with Nandana assumed forms of kitchen gardens. Goloka assumed forms of cowpens; Āgamas, that of the Nigamas; the mountains assumed forms of ornamental gateways of the temples; and Smṛtis, forms of codes of conducts. Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśācas, Vetālas, Kaṭapūtanas etc. assumed human bodies and became laymen in that city.

60-63a. Even Lord Dhūrjaṭi eager to live there assumed the form of a Siddhayogin wearing only a loin cloth and a topless piece of stick. He is not recognised by anyone but he shines everywhere. Viṣṇu and Brahmā wore matted hair and applied sacred ash over their bodies. With perfect control over their sense-organs, they worshipped the Lord of Śoṇādri for a long time. They themselves became preceptors, and performed the rites of initiation

etc. to the people there belonging to all the castes in accordance with their merits.

63b-67a. Conversant with the esoteric doctrines of all the *Āgamas*, they duly performed all the rites. They took away tha remnants of the previous day's worship. They took their bath in the morning, fetched flowers, leaves, fruits etc. and garrulously repeated the *Mantra* of Aruṇanātha thet had been secretly heard from himself and thet is superior to all other *Mantras*. They repeated the *Mantra* always. They worshipped Śiva by offering incense, lights, foods, songs, instrumental music, dances, circumambulations, obeisances, showing mystic gestures of very fresh varieties, seats etc. in accordance with the injunctions. They observed the five *Brahmans* (i.e. religious austerities of celibacy etc.) and the *Ṣaḍaṅgas* (that of study, teaching etc.).

67b-69. Thus Brahmā and Viṣṇu propitiated Aruṇa-Śaṅkara for sixteen thousand years and attained *Śivajñāna*.

This is the secret thet has been heard by me directly from my father Śilāda formerly. The same thing has been recounted to you. What else do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Sports of Śiva and Pārvatī

Sūta said:

1-2. On hearing his words, Mārkaṇḍeya spoke:

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

O holy Lord, what should be heard has been directly heard from you. Still I am overwhelmed with curiosity. So also are these sages. Let it be narrated how Gaurī, the great Goddess, performed a penance here.

Nandikeśvara said:

3. I shall recount thet also in the manner as it has been understood by me. Listen with attention, O Mārkaṇḍeya of great intellect.

4. I hope you know that formerly Śiva married Satī, the Presiding Deity of chaste women, who was the daughter of Dakṣa.

5. (You know) how she became furious with Dakṣa, the Prajāpati who was malicious towards her husband, and how she cast off her body by means of Yogic power.

6. It is also known to you what had been done then by Vīrabhadra obediently carrying out the behests of Śiva, viz. the enormous destruction of the sacrifice of Dakṣa.

7. You have heard about the cutting of the head (i.e. decapitation) of Dakṣa by the Gaṇas as well as the punishment meted out to the Devas, the chiefs of whom are Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra.

8. (You have learnt about) the knocking-off of the teeth of Ravi (the Sun-god), the chopping-off of the hand of the Fire-god and the discomfiture of the celestial women Aditi and others.

9. That Goddess took birth again in the abode of Himavān by the name Umā and another one, Pārvatī, also.

10. In the forest of Sthāṇu she was devoted to his service secretly. The Lord was disinclined to her. Hence he burned down Kāma by means of Kālavahni (i.e. fire of world-destruction).

11. Gaurī who stayed on the peak performed austerities. Thereby she pleased that Lord who had subdued all his sense-organs and gone away to an unknown place along with his Gaṇas (attendants).

12. The Lord married her. In a secluded spot he deligbted that graceful lady saying "Rejoice". He pleased her with various stories, incidents (i.e. acts) and love-sports.

13. On being requested by Rati who was distressed on being widowed, the daughter of the Mountain, who was performing penance on Kāmapīṭha, rekindled (i.e. re-suscitated) Kāma once again.

14. Again she was brought home by her mother Menā and her father Himālaya. She sported for a long time with her husband.

15. At that time (two demons) named Śumbha and Niśumbha obtained from Brahmā the boon that their death should never be at the hands of a male among Devas, Dānavas and human beings.

16. On hearing about this Devas became frightened. The

Lord was secretly requested by the Discus-bearing Lord and others:

17-18. "O gentle Sir, do not be afraid. When (opportune) time comes, it shall be so manoeuvred that such Dānavas would be slain." He (thus) granted freedom from fear to Viṣṇu and others.

The slayer of Andhaka then bade farewell to them. Then he went to the inner apartment and sported with the Goddess as before.

19. Once out of love, but pricking her weak points, Pārvatī was (jocularly) criticised as being black. In order to please him Kālikā immediately cast off her skin.

20. Where the great Goddess willingly cast off her skin, there came up an excellent holy place named Mahākāśīprapāta (Mahākālīprapāta).

21. The black (*Kālī*) skin came to be known as Kauśikī. Kālī stayed on the Vindhya mountain performing penance. She killed both the Asuras who were lustful to her.

22. The Goddess performed penance on that charming peak Gaurīśikhara. Attaining the state of Gaurī ('White complexioned') she made her husband delighted.

23. Conceiving duly,[1] Pārvatī gave birth to the elephant-faced Heraṁba and the six-faced Senānī (i.e. Subrahmaṇya or Skanda).

24. Those who are conversant with the Āgamas say that those two are Viṣṇu and Brahmā who were born of the womb of the Goddess in order to purify themselves of the previous offence.

25. To the parents who were looking at the growing boys and who were immersed in the ocean of delight[2] the knot of love became firmer.

26. The couple played and sported in diverse ways sometimes by playing on the lute, on some occasions by painting and drawing pictures. Śiva and Śivā sometimes sported about by adorning each other.

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1. Strictly speaking Pārvatī did not conceive Skanda. Purāṇas give different versions of Heramba's birth. When he is called the son of Śiva and Pārvatī, he is said not to have been born of Pārvatī (*Brahma-Vaivarta* and LP as quoted in Chitrav's *Practna Caritra Kośa* p. 303).

2. *Varṣābdhau* is probably a misprint for *harṣābdhau* 'ocean of delight'.

27. Sometimes they talked about topics of learning and the Āgamas. On other occasions they sported about with wonderful objects. On some occasions they discussed the incidents and events of the worlds. Thus the couple diverted themselves.

28. Gathering of flowers, aquatic sports and playing on the swing were the means of diversion for the pair in the height of their passionate attachment to each other.

29. Sometimes they were welcomed and honoured by Maināka and on other occasions by Menā. The pair (i.e. Śiva and Pārvatī) were duly received and bonoured by Himavān and adequately provided with amusements.

30. Śiva and Śivā played about for a long time, sometimes by playing at the dice, sometimes by means of music parties and on other occasions by sportful indulgence in charitable gifts.

31. Once, while playing with dice, Umā won the game. Therefore she seized the moon that was on the head of her Lord, annulated it and wore it as an ear-ring.

32. Thus the parents of the mobile and immobile beings stayed in various charming and fascinating places such as the Golden Mountain etc. and enjoyed for a long time hearty and romantic pleasures of love-play.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Pārvatī's Devotional Service to Aruṇācaleśvara

Nandikeśvara said:

1. Managing the domestic duties on behalf of her husband (while) staying at the root of the Ekāmra ('a Single Mango tree') she once entertained people by means of cooked rice and beverages.

2. Once the daughter of the Mountain saw the Lord engaged in performing *Sandhyā*-rite when his eyes were closed and the palms were joined in reverence.

3. Then she thought thus: 'Certainly some fortunate woman

is being meditated upon now (by him). (His professed) love making to me is, I think, a great fraud.

4. How can the crooked mental attitude of men be known? I have been thoroughly deceived by this extremely clever one through pretended services.

5. I think there he entertains only an insincere courtesy for me in his mind. But when alone, it is the fortunate one who becomes an object of love.

6. "From now onwards I am your slave. I have been bought by you through your austerities." Saying thus the enemy of god of Love, the Lord with the crescent moon as his crest-jewel, has deceived me.

7. The pride of matrimonial felicity in those women of deluded minds when love is not of an equal proportion can but evoke derisive laughter among the people.'

8. When the Goddess had thus an excited mind on account of the anger of (unrequited) love, her face appeared (as if) scorched by fire and the heat of the sun.

9. Her slightly copper-coloured eyes welling up with tear drops shone much like the blue lotuses filled with water.

10. When her two eyebrows were parted by the circular sectarian mark between them, it appeared as though the bow of the god of Love was broken into two.

11. Her lower lip frequently quivered on account of the weight of her internal wrath, like the bud of the red Aśoka resting on a tender sprout.

12. The circular (i.e. plump) cheeks of Pārvatī were highly flushed and they shone like polished ruby-mirror.

13. Her breasts heaving with the internal tremor shook like a pair of lotus buds oscillated by the bees caught within them.

14. She thought thus: 'Altogether it is indeed on account of the (unfortunate) absence of my conjugal bliss that the Moon-adorned Lord thinks about another woman.

15. Therefore, I shall go somewhere. What is (to be done) here by me alone and single. Now marital felicity should be acquired by me by performing penance.

16. I must go quietly even as he keeps his eyes closed. If not, he is sure to restrain me by means of (insincere) utterances coming from above his throat.

17. This Gaṅgā who is fond (of them) will bring up my dear children certainly. But, my Lord will not remember me because he is devoted to another woman.'

18. After deciding thus, she turned away at once from the side of the Lord. Without having any particular direction in view she began to go anxiously.

19. The friends Calāvati, Mālyavati, Mālinī, Vijayā and Jayā followed their mistress themselves in great bewilderment, though they were forbidden (by her).

20. She roamed about in the holy mountains, forests, cities, lakes and rivers all round.

21. Wandering over the excellent territory named Draviḍa at the foot of the Sahya mountain, she crossed the river Śakti. The Goddess then spoke to Vijayā:

22. "Not very far off in front is seen a mountain completely red in colour and having eight peaks.[1] This mountain certainly appears to be endued with greatness.

23. On its surrounding valleys and lowlands hermitages of ascetics are seen. They are very sacred and quiet. They are charming on account of the holy penance groves and forests.

24. Let us go and view these holy hermitages. Looking at them my mind is exceedingly pleased."

25. Delighting her friend, the daughter of the Mountain slowly went to the side of that mountain and saw a hermitage.

26-29. Spiders weave webs here (?) Kumbhīras (i.e. sharks etc.) clear away the moss. (Some animals) nourish their young ones with Nīvāra rice; jackals take away fish; Camara deer take away dust heaps with their tails having plenty of hair; buffaloes level up (the bushes) with their raised horns.

Monkeys fetch flowers and fruits for the sages, bears potfuls of honey and boars clay for their ablution and cleansing purposes.

Mutual friendship has been cultivated by (creature with natural animosity such as) crows and owls, parrots and vultures, deer and tigers, lions and elephants, peacocks and serpents as well as rats and cats.

30. Wafting the fragrance of the materials of sacrificial oblation consigned to the sacred fire, a thick cloud of sacred smoke came out through the spaces in between the trees.

1. It appears that Pārvatī discovered Aruṇācala by chance.

31. Cuckoos here recite the *Śatarudrīya* text; crows loudly repeat the hymns and prayers and Śārikās (Turdus Salica) sing *Sāman* verses.

32. Tigers as well as cows wander among the plants and paddy fields, and elephants spray the trees with the waters from their trunks.

33. In a sacred place that was charming and sanctifying she saw a certain sage engaged in penance.

34. Beneath a Saptaparṇa tree (Alstonia Scholaris) he was seated in the 'heroic' posture on a tiger skin of variegated colour placed on a sacred mat of Kuśa grass.

35. He was white in colour owing to the sacred ash smeared all over. With the matted hair having the red lustre of the awn of paddy he appeared like an autumnal cloud with streaks of lighting that are not fickle.

36. His eyes were motionlessly fixed at the tip of the nose; his lips throbbed evenly and with the tips of his fingers he was slowly rotating the rosary of Rudrākṣa beads.

37. Fresh from his ablution, he was wearing two bark garments not very dry along the borders like a mountain having two clouds at the time of dusk.

38. Near the cavity of his chest he had three sacred threads which appeared to be like a net fixed there for catching the wild animals of the six bad qualities, viz. anger, lust etc.

After the requisite customary greetings etc. she asked that ascetic:

Pārvatī enquired:

39-42. Who are you please? What is this excellent mountain where you perform penance?

He replied: "This is Aruṇa mountain highly honoured among holy places. I am sage Gautama. For the sake of salvation I propitiate Śiva by means of penance."

After saying this he understood from Vijayā and others that she was Umā. He then devoutly bowed down to her many times and took her to his own hut.

With bulbous roots, roots, fruits and other things the

sage entertained her and allowed her to perform penance for contributing to the auspiciousness of the universe.

43. Beginning with the manifestation of the Column of Effulgence, he narrated to her everything and related to her the greatness of Śoṇādri fully.

44. "To the east of Śoṇādri there is a holy spot named Sthaliśvara. Śaṃbhu is present there in the form of a refulgent *Liṅga*.

45. It is a place thickly crowded by Gīrvāṇas (i.e. Devas) beginning with Viṣṇu and Brahmā. Hence, O Umā, it is not possible (for me) to perform penance there without distraction or hindrance.

46. This is a foot (i.e. a valley) of the Śoṇa mountain named Pravālācala. Since it is covered and concealed by holy forests, it has some privacy and seclusion.

47. Therefore, I have installed the Three-eyed Lord here itself. I propitiate the Lord in accordance with my capacity by means of various forms of austerities devised by myself.

48. In the vicinity of my hermitage is this great holy spot. Let a hermitage be created by the Goddess. Indeed a long penance has to be performed."

49-52. On being permitted by the ascetic the daughter of the Mountain had a hermitage got ready and engaged herself in the task of performing a great penance. In order to protect the hermitage she appointed Satyavatī, Kānanavāsinī, Subhagā and Dhundhumārī in the east and other quarters. For the over-all defence of the entire penance grove she commanded Durgā of unthwartable impetuosity who was capable of carrying out all orders. Thereafter Pārvatī converted her ornamented braid of hair accustomed to wear Mandāra (Erythrina Indica) flowers into a matted hair for the sake of penance.

53. The lady of delicate limbs cast off her silk cloth as light as mist with the fringe as soft as the down of a swan and began to wear rough bark garments.

54. Her delicate fingers, tender like sprouts, could not bear even the strain of plucking flowers (formerly), but now with them she cut sharp-edged Kuśa grass without any adverse effect.

55. As soft and tender as Śirīṣa (Acacia Sirissa), she

gathered the sprouts of Bilva tree full of thorns as hard and sharp as diamond needles.

56. Early in the morning she used to have her holy dip in the sanctifying river Kamalā. She then duly worshipped the Sun-god with red lotuses.[1]

57. With the waters of the river Śrīnadī mixed with Darbha grass, Akṣata ('raw rice') and Tila ('gingelly seeds') Goddess Gaurī performed the water-libations to the Devas, sages and Manes.

58. In a mystic circle made of sands she invoked the Sun-god and worshipped him with lotuses. Thereafter Gaurī circumambulated it and bowed to it a thousand times.

59. She herself installed a *Liṅga* of Śaṅkara. Pārvatī worshipped it in accordance with the injunctions laid down in the *Āgamas*.

60-61. She propitiated the Sun-god by offering seat, making idols and reciting *Mūla Mantras*. She performed the various ancillary rites. In the different quarters she worshipped (the attendants) the chiefs of whom were Daṇḍin and Piṅgala, Śaktis beginning with Dīptā, the planets beginning with the Moon in the different quarters. She showed the mystic gestures of *Dhenus* (cows) etc. The *Nirmālya* ('remnants of the worship') was dedicated to the fierce splendour (of the Sun). She then offered the foodstuffs prepared.

62. With the extremely good *Argha* (i.e. water and other materials of worship) she sprinkled all round. She worshipped the door and the site of the abode. She performed the *Nyāsa* and other rites too.

63-67. She performed the purificatory rite of the *Bhūtas* (elements). Afterwards she performed the *Antaryāga* ('internal sacrifice').

Assuming the lotus-posture in her heart she worshipped *Jñāna* (Knowledge), *Dharma* (Virtue) and others in due serial order. She assigned Vāmā and other Śaktis ('power-deities') on the petals (of the heart-lotus). The Sun and god Brahmā were

1. VV 56ff give the daily routine of the performance of penance by Pārvatī. The procedure of Śiva-worship as detailed here is based on Śaiva Āgamas.

posted at the tip of the Petal, the Moon-god and Viṣṇu at the end (tip) of the filaments, the Fire-god and god Śiva at the tip of the pericarp (of the heart-lotus). Above that she placed the group of Śaktis and had the *Pañca Brahmans*[1] installed then. With the limbs (of her mental self) she received them with *Pādya* ('water to wash feet') and other relating formalities of reception and performed their ablution. She offered them sandal-paste, flowers and other articles of worship. She offered them incense and waved lamp (light) before them. She again worshipped the *Pañca-Brahmans* and six *Aṅgas*. She performed all the due formalities of worship of Indra and others and of (their weapons like) *Vajra* and others according to injunctions. She then scattered flowers in eight directions.

68. After worshipping the five faces (of Śiva) she completed the worship of Caṇḍeśvara. She always worshipped Śiva by means of circumambulation, obeisances and other due formalities.

69-70. She performed the *Homa* rite by means of those materials which yield conjugal felicity in accordance with the injunctions laid down in *Śivāgama*. At the end of the worship when the fire is removed, she made the customary *Upacāras* ('services'). She herself then welcomed and rendered services to guests with bulbous roots, roots, fruits etc.

71-73. She performed various types of penances in various seasons. During summer she used to stand on the tip of her big toe in the middle of the five fires. During early winter she used to stand in whirlpools and get nourishment from the nectar of the Moon. During the nights of rainy season despite the downpours of rain she stood motionless in darkness. She appeared as a streak of lightning accompanying a cloud. She spent the nights of late winter season displaying lotuses in the form of her hands and feet and the Moon in that of her face. She could display these without any fatigue.

74. By offering the seeds of Nīvāra paddy she nurtured the deer staying in the neighbourhood—the deer that had never experienced violence.

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1. The Pañca-Brahmans are the five 'faces' (aspects) of Śiva, viz. *Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora* and *Īśāna*.

75. With great love and affection she brought up and nursed all the trees in the hermitage by regularly pouring water in the basins at their roots, the water brought in big pots by excellent girl-attendants.

76. That daughter of the leader of Mountains circumambulated the Śoṇa mountain everyday in the company of her friends for the fulfilment of her ambition.

77. She performed the *Japa* of the five-syllabled *Mantra* (viz. *Namaḥ Śivāya*). She uttered and recited hymns to Śiva. Mentally she meditated upon the Lord in the form of the Śoṇa mountain.

78. Everyday the daughter of the Mountain offered obeisance to the Lord of Aruṇācala by a regular performance of circumambulation etc. Conversant with the injunctions laid down in the *Śivāgamas* she performed the penance for a long time.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Demon Mahiṣa Slain by Durgā

Nandikeśvara said:

1-2. In the meantime Asura Mahiṣa heard from someone that she (i.e. Pārvatī) was present here. He despised and treated with contempt all (other) Daityas, Dānavas and Asuras. He had already destroyed Purandara. He had conquered all the worlds. He had terrorized Siddhas and Vidyādharas. On account of the boon he had received, he could not be restrained by means of any type of weapon or missile.

3. He was unaffected by even the severest of imprecations. He was resorted to and served by the proudest Dānavas, Daityas and Kauṇapas.

4. He defiled the wives of sages. He created obstacles in the path of righteousness. In strength he was far superior to Bala, Puloman, Namuci and Vṛtra.

5. He belonged to the family of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He was like another Hiraṇyākṣa. It is said that he sent a female messenger in order to entice her (i.e. the Goddess).

6. Thereupon she (i.e. the messenger) assumed the guise of an ascetic woman and addressed the following unbecoming, improper words to Girijā in the presence of her friends:

7. "Alas! O timid girl, why do you stay in this terrible forest? Really you are accustomed to and worthy of dwelling in inner apartments of a royal palace!

8. What for has your mind become averse to the desire for enjoyment of pleasures in (the days of) the prime of youth? What for has it resorted to and engaged in austerities very difficult to be pursued even by Devas?

9. You have abandoned a bed filled with soft downs of swans with a canopy studded with pearls. O lady of tender and delicate limbs, why do you sleep on rough and rugged rocks?

10. Fortunately, Mṛḍa (i.e. Śiva) who is sluggish due to his frequent pursuit of penances has already been deserted by you. There is no one else among the dwellers of heaven suitable to you.

11. But there is a leading Dānava (named) Mahiṣa who is the overlord of all the three worlds. O lady of beautiful brows, if you see him, you will immediately leave off your penance.

12. Why should I keep it secret? Having heard everything (about you) our Lord has been lovesick for a long time. He has sent me as a messenger to fetch you."

13. As she irrelevantly went on speaking thus to the utter distastefulness of the Goddess, Vijayā who understood the state of the mind of the Goddess, expelled the demoness.

14. In the height of her fury she reassumed the form of a Daitya-woman taking the vow (of revenge). She went to Mahiṣa, the Asura, and reported the incident to him.

15. On hearing everything he became excessively furious and his eyes turned red. Surrounded by crores of Daityas he rushed in with a desire to take the Goddess by force.

16. He covered the entire ground with chariots, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers and the ethereal space with banners and flags.

17. With battle cries, war-whoops and the sounds of martial music the sky appeared to break in twain. As the Daityas kicked

and stamped with their feet (while marching) the surface of the earth split asunder.

18-19. Along with him his commanders too set out (for war). They were Karāla, Durdhara, Vicaṣṇu, Vikarālaka, Bāṣkala, Durmukha, Caṇḍa, Pracaṇḍa, Cāmarāsura, Mahāhanu, Mahāmauli, Ugrāsya, Vikaṭekṣaṇa, Jvālāsya, and Dahana.

20. On hearing this uproar and upheaval the Goddess was afraid of obstacles in her observances. She ordered Durgā to annihilate the Daityas.

21. In a secret chasm among the hills of Aruṇādri she (Durgā) got on the back of a lion. With brilliant arms held in her hands she appeared like Kālikā come down to the earth.

22. She produced a leonine roar as fierce as the rumbling sound of a thick raining cloud. The extremities of her lips throbbed. The sprout-like fingers moved.

23. From their limbs the Mothers furiously created a multitude of Yoginīs for pleasing the Goddess. They were thousands in number and they were capable of annihilating the Daityas.

24. Some of them there had a reddish brown complexion. They held long sticks and batons. They had swans for their vehicles. They had four faces with lips throbbing due to anger. They came (to that region).

25. Some of them furiously set out with blazing tridents in their hands with their brows knitted and ornaments jingling. They had hulls for their vehicles.

26. Others set out along with their armies with peacocks for their vehicles. They were hundreds in number, with Śaktis, staffs in their hands and *Abhaya-Mudrās* (i.e. gestures indicating immunity from fear). They were six-faced.

27. Still others set out with greater fury, mounted on Garuḍas. They held conchs and discuses like the firmament holding the sun and the moon.

28. Some proceeded ahead with tigers for their vehicles. They had their complexion like the colour of blue water lilies. Their snouts produced grunting growling sounds and they wielded pestles and ploughs.

29. Others set out with white elephants for their vehicles. They had a thousand eyes red with anger. They were hundred crores in number and they held thunderbolts.

30. Some came there riding on horses. They resembled lightning streaks. They held swords and clubs. Their faces were tawny due to anger.

31. All these blocked the sixtyfour crores of Asuras outside the hermitage with great force like the radiance of the Sun stopping (the advance of a mass of darkness).

32. Thereupon a terrible battle ensued between the multitude of Yoginīs and the army of the Dānavas, in which they hit one another with fists and dragged the tufts of hair of one another.

33. The heads of the Daityas crushed and cut by the arrows discharged by the Yoginīs covered the surface of the ground all round like (lotuses) growing on land.

34. Rivers of blood flowed with hair and tresses (of the Daityas) appearing like moss, with the Vipāṭha arrows rolling about like Pāṭhīna fish. They appeared to be smiling on account of the lotus-like faces of the various Goddesses.

35. Piśācikās (i.e. witches, vampires) mounted the trunks of elephants as though they were mansions. They indulged in their rough and fierce *Tāṇḍava* dances. They drank blood as if it were liquor and shone thus.

36. By means of the terrible skulls of the Daitya soldiers, resembling toy *Ḍamaru* drums, the groups of the Yoginīs consumed their (i.e. Daityas') blood like spirituous liquors.

37. Flocks of female jackals avoided the entrails suspecting them to be nets and nooses. Although they were hungry, the jackals set aside the flesh with darts and arrows still sticking to it.

38. The dust of the ground raised during the stir and excitement of the battle subsided by (being absorbed by) the honey oozing from the Mandāra flowers showered by Siddhas and Vidyādharas.

39. The horses of the enemies shone like porcupines because the darts, shafts and javelins discharged with excessive fury and speed by the Yoginīs stuck firmly to their bodies.

40-41. The powerful Dānavas were slain in various ways: some of them with staffs and rods; others with sharp spears; some with Śaktis; others with discuses; a few with ploughs; some by means of thunderbolts; others through the swords of the Yoginīs.

They were crushed and pounded. Excepting the commanders all of them were utterly destroyed.

42. Brāhmī herself came and fought the battle, blazing for a long time. By means of her terrible rod she killed Karāla.[1]

43. Māheśvarī fought the battle for a long time with the trident. Becoming exceedingly furious, she immediately cut off the head of Durdhara.

44-46. With her Śakti Kaumārī cut off the head of Asura Cikṣura. Vaiṣṇavi cut off the head of Vikarāla by means of the discus. Vārāhī quickly cut off the head of Bāṣkala by means of a mace. Aindrī made Durmukha immediately short of life with her thunderbolt. With the edge of her circular discus Cāmuṇḍā chopped off Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa. It was because she killed them (i.e. Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa) that she got the famous name *Cāmuṇḍā*.

47-48. As Mahiṣāsura furiously went for fighting the heroic Asuras Pracaṇḍa, Cāmara, Mahāmauli, Mahāhanu, Ugrāsya, Vikaṭākṣa, Jvālāsya and Dahana followed him like Kālanemi and others followed Vipracitti.

49. Wearing helmets they rode in chariots. They held bows and had good quivers. Encouraging and stirring up the camps of the armies they reached the battleground waving their flags and banners.

50. With terrific leonine roars they filled the quarters all round. Showering volleys of arrows they rushed against the multitudes of the Mothers.

51. Those (Mothers) fought with those powerful Asuras. But unable to bear it they sought refuge in Goddess Durgā with the lion as her vehicle.

52. After recounting the invincibility of the wicked Daitya in the guise of a buffalo by means of his Māyā all the seven Mothers eulogized Goddess Durgā thus:

53. "O Goddess, you lie concealed within the lotus-like eyes of Viṣṇu in the form of Yoganidrā ('transcendental Yogic slumber') sportfully like a honey-bee.

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1. VV 42-46 detail the exploits of different Śaktis, e.g. Brāhmī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī etc. corresponding to god Brahmā, Maheśvara, Kumāra (Skanda) and other prominent gods.

54. O Mother, if you had not made him and the demons lose sense in that manner, how could Viṣṇu have killed Madhu and Kaiṭabha with their own permission?

55. If you had not been born as Kauśiki bringing about the death of Śumbha and Niśumbha, O Goddess, how could the glory and prosperity of the Guardians of Quarters have been regained?

56. O Vindhyavāsinī ('Resident of Vindhya'), what fruitful penance has been performed by Vindhya where a friendship with you can be acquired even by the Kirātīs ('huntresses')!

57. The liquor offered as a present by Dhanada (i.e. Kubera) and brought along with the juices of the Daityas that had restrained human beings, had been drunk by you, O Mother.

58. O Mother, you are the power of creation of Brahmā, the power of sustenance of the slayer of Madhu, i.e. Viṣṇu, and the power of annihilation of Rudra. Thus you are all-powerful.

59. You will be born of Yaśodā and Nanda with the name Ekānaṃśā.[1] You will render help to Hari in the annihilation of Kaṃsa and other Asuras.

60. You are Vidyā; you are Mahāmāyā; you are Lakṣmī; you are Sarasvatī; you are Goddess Pārvatī too. O Durgā, what is it that you are not (born as)?"

Nandikeśvara said:

61. Due to this eulogy Durgā herself granted immunity from fear to the Mātṛs ('Mothers'). Very much delighted she set out for a fight with Mahiṣa, the Asura.

62-64. She slew Pracaṇḍa with the edge of the circular wheel, Cāmara with Bhiṇḍipāla (i.e. an instrument like a sling to discharge missiles), Mahāmauli with a dagger, and Mahāhanu with a Karpara ('skull-like weapon'). She slew Ugravaktra with a sharp-edged sword, Vikaṭacakṣus with the Śakti, Jvālāmukha with a mallet, and Dahana with a mace. After killing them she herself fought with Mahiṣa with great fury. Delighted in her mind she made a very terrible leonine roar in front of Mahiṣa.

1. Durgā is here identified with Ekānaṃśā who is better known as Vindhyavāsinī.

65. Then the exceedingly infuriated Asura Mahiṣa pierced Durgā with arrows aimed at her broad forehead, breasts and cheeks.

66. Thereupon Durgā with great impetuosity struck the Lord of Asuras in his arms, chest and face by means of arrows with shining edges.

67. Thereupon the Daitya struck Durgā in her face with three arrows. He discharged five arrows on each of the arms and two on each of the eyes.

68. Durgā cut off his charioteer with a single arrow, the horses with eight arrows, the bow with three arrows and the flagstaff with four arrows.

69. Thereupon the leading Daitya fought on foot. He discharged Śataghnī (a great missile) towards Durgā. It blazed. It resembled the massive baton of Kāla (i.e. god of Death).

70-72. Devas yelled with fright exclaiming 'Alas!' and the group of the Mothers fled but Durgā playfully caught hold of that oncoming missile.

He hurled various weapons at Durgā, viz. dagger, goad, noose, Bhuśuṇḍī missile, small sword, spike, Śakti, mace, discus, Tomaras ('iron clubs'), Phalaka ('arrow-tip'), Sṛṇi ('hooklike goad'), axe, Bhiṇḍipāla ('sling-like instrument hurling missiles'), Paṭṭiśa ('sharp-edged spear') and Laguḍa (i.e. stick). He hurled these like cloud at the time of dissolution showering thunderbolts.

73. Catching hold of the oncoming missiles and weapons discharged by the enemies, Durgā broke them with her hands freely like a cow-elephant breaking stumps of sugarcane.

74. Durgā's vehicle, the lion, hit (the demon) by the tip of his tail, tore him with his curved teeth and struck with lotus-like nails (?).

75. The demon changed his forms frequently remaining a lion for an instant, a boar for another, a tiger, an elephant and a buffalo successively. Thus the Daitya fought with Durgā.

76. The extremely infuriated buffalo struck the lion (of the Goddess) with its sharp horns. He struck the Goddess too repeatedly.

77. For a moment he stayed in the middle of the sky; for another moment he came down on the surface of the earth; for

another moment he wandered in all the quarters and for a moment he vanished.

78. Requested by the group of the Mothers Durgā smilingly tore off the Dānava Mahiṣa by means of her never-failing trident.

79. He shouted in a growling tone when the Dānava began to fall; she placed her foot on his shoulders with great force.

80. When his neck was pressed down and afflicted, the Asura gave up his life. She cut off his head and taking it in her hand she began to dance.

81. When the demon in the form of buffalo, who had been a source of trouble to all the worlds, was crushed and destroyed in the battle thus by Durgā, Suras danced, the great sages became delighted and clouds showered divine flowers.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Pārvatī's Eulogy of the Lord of Aruṇācala

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-2. Fie upon the Daitya Mahiṣa for this sort of shameful conduct! Bravo! How wonderful was the exploit of Durgā, the destroyer of sins and sorrows.

When Mahiṣa, the Asura, was thus killed by Bhadrakālī, what did the daughter of the Mountain, who was engaged in penance, do?

Nandikeśvara replied:

3. Afterwards holding the head of the Daitya in one hand she (i.e. Bhadrakālī) saluted Gaurī by the other hand holding a sword.

4. Thereupon seeing her dancing with delight, the Goddess with her eyes wet with sympathy, spoke to her, illuminating the sky with the rays of her teeth:

5. "O Vindhyavāsinī, an extremely difficult task has been accomplished by you. Thanks to your power, my penance has become free from obstacles.

6. This head of a buffalo is unclean and awful, O Goddess of highly sanctifying conduct. It beboves you to cast it off from your hand."

7. On being told thus by Gaurī the mind of Durgā was overcome with disgust. Hence, in order to cast off that head she shook and tossed her hand many times.

8. "O Goddess, let a fresh Tīrtha be created that will be destructive of sins. By taking a plunge therein, O Durgā, you will have the requisite expiation."

9. On being told thus by Gautama Durgā who was afraid of sins split the rocky slab with her powerful sword.

10. From the bottom of the rocky surface that had been split and severed as far as the nether world, a stream of water rose up as pure as the mind of a good man.

11. Repeating the excellent *Mantra* "Obeisance to the Lord of Śoṇādri", she took a plunge in the sacred water of great depth.

12. By that time the *Liṅga* that had been in the neck of the buffalo dropped down on the ground. It became installed on the banks under the name Pāpanāśana.

13. Therefrom rose up Durgā with all her sins washed off by the waters of the *Tīrtha*. Thereupon the head of Mahiṣa, the Asura, fell down from her hand.

14. She circumambulated and bowed down to the Lord of Pāpanāśana. Thereupon she was congratulated by Gaurī and Gautama.

15. On seeing her rid of sins thus within her sight Pārvatī, the daughter of the Mountain, said to the sage of long standing penance:

16-17. "I had immediately granted permission in the matter of killing Mahiṣa, the Asura. This Vindhyavāsinī caught hold of the body of the wicked buffalo and swallowed it. This is his *Liṅga*, an auspicious one. Therefore recount to her as well as to me the requisite expiation, O excellent sage."

Gautama said:

18. O Goddess, the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation of all the worlds, it is meditating on you alone that destroys all sins.

19. Yet, it has been (enquired) by you keeping the way of the world in view. Bounds of decency fixed by themselves are not transgressed by the great ones.

20. A certain holy rite that washes off the internal turbidity is being mentioned by me now, O mother; let it be heard with attention.

21. This Aruṇādri is *Analādri* ('a mountain of fire') itself lying concealed. It blazes with its own refulgence on the full-moon day in the month of Kārttika.

22. Service to it and penance should be performed by you, O Kātyāyanī. By witnessing that illuminated refulgence all your desired objects will be achieved.

23-24. Aṁbā who had been terrible from that time, was told thus by Gautama. Now she turned into a devotee of Śiva engaged in the worship of Śiva. She performed penance resorting to the middle of Five Fires. In the middle of four (worldly) fires she stood, fixing her gaze on the Sun (the fifth fire).

25-27. The daughter of the leading Mountain shone like a brilliant bar of gold. Then drawn as it were by the long cords of love of Pārvatī that full-moon day in the month of Kārttika—that holy and splendid lunar day—approached. Then at the close of the day a certain brilliance of unlimited power was seen on the peak of the Aruṇa mountain by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra who had come there for the very same purpose.

28-29. All round it was served by the Devas and the groups of divine sages. On seeing that magnificently effulgent light without any fuel, without oil and without wicks, Pārvatī was greatly wonderstruck. She circumambulated, bowing down at every step. Delighted much, the daughter of the Mountain eulogized the Lord Aruṇādriśvara:

30. "Obeisance to you, O Lord with Meru as your bow, to the Resident of the Kailāsa mountain, to the Son-in-law of the snow-clad Mountain, to the Lord who has assumed the form of Śoṇa mountain.

31. Salute to the Lord worthy of being worshipped by the Suras beginning with Varuṇa, to the Lord having the brilliance of the midday sun, to the Lord of Aruṇācala, to the Lord who are the embodiment of mercifulness.

32. Be victorious, O Lord, whose head is adorned with Gaṅgā and the crescent moon, O Lord, who have fascinated the minds of the wives of all sages by means of your handsome features.

33. Be victorious, O Lord, who are possessed of the glory of the god of Love due to the close contact of the daughter of the Mountain. Be victorious, O Lord, who are an expert in the repetition of the (sexual) play over the body of Nārāyaṇa adopted by means of Māyā (?).

34. Be victorious, O Lord, indulging in blissful Tāṇḍava dance at the advent of the time of dusk. Be victorious, O Lord, worshipped by Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Vidyādharas.

35. Be victorious, O father of Heraṁba; be victorious, O Lord, fond of the six-faced Lord (i.e. Skanda). Be victorious, O Lord, worthy of being prayed to by the daughter of Himavān. Be victorious, O Lord, rarely accessible to Pārthivas (i.e. kings, worldly-minded ones etc.)."

36. After eulogizing thus the Goddess fixed her eyes repeatedly on the refulgence. On seeing her thus, the Bull-emblemed Lord melted on the pretext of mercy.

37-38. The Lord made her merge into him and then assumed a form of excessive beauty. On seeing the splendid lady Śivā, he mounted the divine bull.

Giriśa then began to pacify the daughter of the king of Mountains, the beautiful lady who had cast off everything on account of wounded pride and had engaged herself in penance.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Śiva Praises Pārvatī

Nandikeśvara said:

1-6a. Brahmā came there along with Sarasvatī, Mahāviṣṇu with Lakṣmī, Indra with Śacī and all the other Guardians of the Quarters also came. So also Gandharvas, groups of celestial dam-

sels, Vasus, Suras, Gaṇas numbering thirty-three crores, other groups of sages, the eleven great Rudras, the twelve Ādityas, Bhairavas, Piśācas, Vetālas, Kaṭapūtanās, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Serpents, Bhūtas and all the other servants of Śiva. All of them were extremely joyous. All those hideous beings surrounded Maheśāna and came there in thousands. On seeing the activities of Yoginīs and Dānavas, the activities worthy of being praised by heroes and as terrible as the events at the time of the close of the *Kalpa*, all of them were extremely surprised.

6b-8. (*Partially defective text*) On seeing the Lord present there Umā was greatly delighted. She gave up the pain of separation long grown in her. A thrill (of joy) made her hair stand on end. She trembled and perspired out of bashfulness; the lady of heavy breasts kept her eyes fixed on the toes of her feet.

Getting down from the bull, Śiva grasped her hand. Smile spread (as if) all over his body and heightened the splendour of his throat. He spoke to her in love:

Śiva said:

9-12a. O blessed lady, why do you get excited like this without any reason? Since you are worthy of being propitiated by all, palms have been joined in reverence by me also. Don't you know that our unity is like that of the moonlight and the moon?

O Goddess of the Devas, immature tendency like this is ingrained in you since that beginningless period of time. O daughter of the Lord of the Mountains, with limbs as soft as the Śirīṣa flower, what a great incongruity between this delicate body of yours and the austerities, meditations and the like, befitting only hardy people!

12b. I am Nārāyaṇa and you are Lakṣmī. I am Brahmā; you are Sarasvatī.

13. You are the daughter of Varuṇa and I am the leader of Serpents. You are Rohiṇī and I am the Moon. You are Svāhā and I am the Fire-god. You are Suvarcalā and I am the Sun-god.

14. You are Gaṅgā and I am the Ocean. You are the fertile land and I am Meru. You are Śacī and I am Indra. You are Rati and I am the god of Love.

15. You are Buddhi and I am Rāja-Rāja (i.e. Supreme sovereign, Kubera?). You are Śamā and I am the Wind-god; you are the wave and I am the ocean. You are Prakṛti and I am Puruṣa.

16-17. You are Vidyā and I am the knowable. O Pārvatī, you are the word and I am its connotation. I am supreme Lord and you, by the virtue of your being the order incarnate, are a part of mine. O Goddess, you are competent to create, sustain, annihilate, duly arrange,[1] bless. Hence you must not entertain any difference between us as is done by ordinary unenlightened people.

18. We are of the nature of *Cit* ('consciousness') and *Prakāśa* ('light' i.e. knowledge whereby everything is known). You have assumed a body of your own free will. You perplex me again and again and in vain feel jealous of me.

19-20. A remedy for that is being devised by me.

After saying this Īśa sat down and made her sit at his side. He made Gaurī get hidden in his own person as if out of bashfulness. When they lovingly merged into each other their pair of bodies became united into one.

21-24. It was as though two objects were simultaneously perceived in close proximity[2] (?). In one half it was as white as camphor and in the other half it is as red as red lead. The body of Śiva and Śivā that became a single Unit was highly wonderful. In one-half there was flowing tress. In the middle of the necklace there was a fennal flower (?). The body of the crescent moon-crested Lord had silk in one-half that was beautiful with a single anklet, ear-ring and bracelet. The body of the companion of Kubera shone with a single breast. After giving the Goddess (his own body) for residence, Vāmadeva spoke to her:

1. The text uses terms of Śivāgama. Hence the reading should have been *Pidhāna* 'concealment' which is one of the five powers of Śiva enlisted here; *Vidhāna* 'arrangement' is already included in *sṛṣṭi-sthiti* 'creation and sustenance' and as such is superfluous. Devanāgarī MSS many times confuse प and व due to similarity of forms of these characters. The editor of the Venkateshwar Press text has repeated this mistake. (Tr.)

2. VV 21-24 describe the *Ardhanārīśvara* form of Śiva showing the union of Śiva and Pārvatī.

25-29a. "Henceforth, O blessed lady, let there be no room for anger in you. Since you abandoned Guha who yearned for (your) breast-milk and went away for performing penance, you will be known by the name Apītastanī.[1] Stay thus near me. Let all the people propitiate Goddess Apītastanī and me, the Lord of Śoṇādri, and be happy in enjoying worldly pleasures and salvation. This Durgā, the destroyer of Mahiṣa, the deity born of your part, shall be present here itself, yielding the Siddhi of Mantras to men. Let this holy *Tīrtha* named Khaḍgatīrtha be destructive of all sins and sickness of human beings, even if they take their holy bath therein only once.

29b-32. This Lord of Pravālagiri shall be destructive of sins. Let him be for the great welfare of men endowed with faith and devotion. This Gautama, O blessed lady, is a deserving person for your blessing. Let him have the benefit in accordance with his penance in the different worlds as long as the moon and the stars exist.

These Seven Mothers are the sole mothers of the seven worlds. From today let them be present here for the glory of the worlds.

33-35. Teachers, Bhairavas, Kṣetrapālakas and pupils shall also be present always in the holy place of Aruṇa. Here in the sacred place of Aruṇa I shall also remain by the name of Aruṇa. You also shall be here by the name of Aruṇādevī melting with kindness.

Since Aruṇā and the Lord are always present here, all the *Siddhis* will be easily accessible in this holy spot of Aruṇa to those who entertain a desire for them.

36. A person who listens to this story of the propitiation of the Lord of Śoṇagiri performed by the daughter of the King of Mountains shall get rid of enemies (such as lust, anger etc.) and easily attain heavenly pleasures and liberation."

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1. The legendary etymology of the name of the Goddess at Aruṇācala.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO[1]

The Story of Vajrāṅgada

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-3. O Lord perpetually experiencing the bliss of Śiva, O Lord Nandikeśvara, I have been delighted by you through the nectar of the glory of Śoṇeśa.

How did Vajrāṅgada, the Pāṇḍya king, transgress Śoṇa? How did he regain prosperity and affluence through devotion to him alone? How were the overlords of Vidyādharas, viz. Kāntiśāli and Kalādhara who had been struck down by the curse of Durvāsas, protected by Śaṁbhu in the form of Śoṇa?

Nandikeśvara said:

4. O son of Mṛkaṇḍu, indeed you have obtained the fruit of longevity because your devotion to the Lord of the Bhūtas (i.e. Śiva) is so steady and firm.

5. I Shall recount to you the details of the story of Vajrāṅgada as well as the events in the lives of Vidyādharas whereby the power of the Lord of Śoṇādri has come to be revered in the world.

6. Formerly there was a king named Vajrāṅgada in the land of Pāṇḍyas (i.e. Madurā). The earth was (as if) a doll placed upon the column (in the form) of the (powerful) arms of that king.

7-8. He was virtuous, wise and conversant with justice. He was majestic, courteous and efficient. He was calm, modest and intelligent. He was a blessed and contented man keeping the vow of one wife only. He was glorious and engaged in the worship of Śiva. He was the most excellent one among those

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1. The following chapters tell a story to emphasize the importance of circumambulating the Aruṇācala hill on foot only. The curse of Durvāsas becomes ineffective by the (unintentional) circumambulation by the beasts (viz., the horse and the deer). The beasts (i.e. the imprecated divine beings) regained their original form and status due to this unintended *Parikramā*.

King Vajrāṅgada got back not only his original strength but *Siddhi* as well by rendering service to Aruṇācala by donating villages as *Agrahāra*, digging tanks and wells, arrangement for the stay of devotees etc.

people of good habit and practice. Having conquered his enemies he administered the territory between the bridge (i.e. Rāmeśvara in the south) and Kedāra (in the north).

9. Once wandering about on his excellent horse under the pretext of hunting, he entered the forest in the outskirts of Aruṇācala.

10. On seeing a musk deer of excessive fragrance there he eagerly rode his horse in pursuit of it.

11. Chased by him that deer went round the Śoṇaparvata in the manner of circumambulation with the speed of mind and then fell down.

12. With strength dwindling and fatigue increasing the King fell down from his horse bereft of lustre like a person of exhausted merit falling from heaven.

13. For an unknown reason he was as though harassed by a *Mātaṅga* (i.e. Cāṇḍāla). Like a person possessed by an evil spirit the King did not know his own self for a moment.

14. He thought thus: 'What is this? Without any reason whatsoever my strength has been lost. Where has my vehicle, the horse, gone suddenly?'

15. While he was engrossed in anxious thought thus, incompetent to understand it, the sky was suddenly seen as having matted hair through the streaks of lightning.

16. Even as he was watching, the horse and the deer immediately cast off their animal bodies and attained the state of beings striding through the sky.

17. They shone with crowns, ear-rings, necklaces and bracelets. They wore silk clothes as under-garments as well as upper clothes. They had garlands too.

18. Appearing as though they dispelled the darkness arising from his agony by means of the clusters of rays of their teeth, they spoke to the King whose mind was overwhelmed with wonder and dismay:

19. "O King, do not get dejected. Understand that, thanks to the power of the Lord of Śoṇādri, this new state of ours is a result of that."

20. The King was somewhat consoled by those words of

those two (beings). With palms joined in reverence he humbly spoke to them both:

21. "Who are you please, by whom such a sudden shock and grief as this has been caused? O gentle Sirs, speak out. Indeed saving distressed persons is a characteristic of great men."

22. When this question was put by him, Kalâdhara who was directed by Kântiśâlî spoke to the wondering King:

23. "Know, O King, that formerly we were the leaders of Vidyâdharas. We were close friends of each other like Vasanta and Madana.

24. Once we went to the penance grove of sage Durvâsas at the side of the golden mountain. It was (actually) impossible of access even mentally (to others).

25. We saw his holy flower-garden which extended to more than a *Krośa* (i.e. 3 kms.), which yielded materials for him to propitiate Śiva and perform penance. It was shining brilliantly with flowers.

26. Though we are humble and well-behaved, we did not have at that time the good qualities of intelligent persons befitting their *Sattva* nature. We entered that garden eager to gather flowers.

27. Since that spot was highly pleasing to the heart, Kântiśâlî who was excessively haughty, moved about frequently stamping on the ground with force when he placed his feet on it.

28. Vicious in mind and fascinated by the excessive fragrance of the flowers, I handled the blooming flowers (frequently).

29-30. (*Partially defective*) Durvâsas who was like a mass of penance, was seated on his tiger's skin under a Śâṇḍilya tree (Aegle Marmelos). He appeared to blaze like fire. At the height of anger his thick-set lower lip began to throb. His brows became crooked and they were knitted in a terrible manner.

31. Richly endowed with brilliant splendour as he was, he became furious. His body was covered with perspiration. The sage looked at us as if he would burn us with his eyes. He rebuked us:

32. 'O sinners! Transgressors of good manners and formalities! You are highly proud. Who are you? You have become locusts for the blazing fire of my anger.

33. This penance-grove of mine is holy. It sanctifies all living beings. Even the Sun and the Moon do not touch this with their feet (i.e. their rays do not fall here).

34. This park is (as if) synonymous with the service rendered to the enemy of the Puras. Even the wind does not blow here, nor do bees stick to this place.

35. Therefore, let this sinner become a horse in the terrestrial world. He has defiled this garden by treading upon it. Let him be afflicted on the earth by being the vehicle of others.

36. This other one had greedily coveted the fragrance of the flowers. Let him fall in an exceedingly fierce mountain cave. He shall be reborn as a musk deer.'

37. When the thunderbolt of this curse was made to fall on us by that sage of fierce fury, our haughtiness vanished instantaneously and we sought refuge in him.

38. We grasped his feet and spoke to that brilliant sage: 'This curse of yours will not be in vain. Let its end be mentioned.'

39. Then, on seeing us extremely distressed in our minds, O King, the leading sage became very cool out of sympathy and favourably obliging to us.

40. He spoke: 'Nowhere can you, wicked-minded ones, get redress as here. By the circumambulation of Aruṇādri the curse shall subside.

41. Formerly the Lord, the enemy of the Puras, presided over a splendid assembly. He was served by the Guardians of the Quarters, viz. Indra, Upendra, Yama and others.

42. At that time the presiding deity of the Nandana forest offered him a certain red fruit as present.

43. On account of their childish nature Gajānana and Ṣaḍānana became curious and eager. They requested their father for that tempting fruit.

44-45. Thereupon the Lord spoke to his sons excessively coveting the fruit. He kept the fruit concealed in his hand and said to the children: 'I shall give this fruit to the boy who is competent to circumambulate this entire earth encircled by the Lokāloka (mountain).'

46. When this was mentioned by the Lord of Pārvatī with a

smile on his moon-like face, Skanda began to circumambulate the earth.

47. But Lambodara (i.e. Gaṇeśa) circumambulated his father, the Lord in the form of Śoṇaśaila, and instantly stood in front of him.

48. On seeing his cleverness the Three-eyed Lord lovingly sniffed at the head and gave the fruit to Heramba.

49-50. 'From today onwards be the presiding deity of all fruits.' After granting this boon to the Single-toothed Lord Śaṅkara spoke to the attendants in the assembly, viz. all the Suras and Asuras, rendering the hall whitish grey in colour by means of the spreading lustre of his teeth resembling moonlight:

51. 'This Śoṇādri is my immobile form. He who devoutly circumambulates this shall attain *Sārūpya* ('Identity of form') (with me).

52. If anyone's feet begin to pain on account of the circumambulation of this (mountain), he shall become an emperor and obtain the permanent region that is the most excellent of all.'

53. At the bidding of Śambhu thus all the Devas circumambulated Śoṇaśaila and obtained their respective desires.

54. You two are defiled on account of your haughtiness. Hence you are punished by me. By the circumambulation of Śoṇādri the curse will come to an end in your case.

55-56. By coming into contact with the Pāṇḍya king, Vajrāṅgada, even as animals, you will have an opportunity to circumambulate Aruṇādri.

Thus we two were forced to be born immediately as a horse and a deer due to the excessive burden of our sins. Our bodies became dried up due to the Halāhala poison of the curse issuing from the great ocean of the great sage prone to be furious."

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Story of Kalādhara and Kāntiśāli

Kalādhara narrated:

1. Kāntiśāli, my friend, was born as a horse in Kāmboja. O great King; he attained the state of being your vehicle.

2 I attained the state of a sweet-scented deer. I moved about here and there over this mountain being very proud on account of this fragrance issuing from my body.

3. Now both of us have been given the chance of circumambulating the Lord of Śoṇādri, O virtuous one, by you who had come there under the pretext of hunting.

4. On account of the fault of riding a vehicle (while circumambulating Śoṇādri) your condition has become like this. Thanks to the meritorious deed of walking (i.e. circumambulating) on foot, our previous position has been retrieved by us.

5. O great King, it is because of your association that we two have been liberated from the bondage of being animals and we have regained our own abode. Hail unto thee forever!

6. The King with his palms folded in reverence requested Kalādhara and Kāntiśāli who were desirous of going to their abodes after saying this:

7. "Thus you have crossed the ocean of the curse, thanks to the power of Śaṅkara in the form of Śoṇaśaila. But what about my redemption?

8. My mind is whirling as it were, taking the eyes with it. My vital airs appear to come out. There it is fate that is more powerful."

Kalādhara and Kāntiśāli replied:

9. Listen, we shall suggest the remedy for your redemption. Listen to it with attentive mind that has got rid of all anxieties and agonies.

10. Fix your mind on the Lord of Aruṇādri, the storehouse of mercy, the Lord who is competent to create, sustain, annihilate, arrange (conceal?) and bless the universe.

11. It has been directly noticed by you now how powerful the Lord is. This has been the condition of both of us who have (now) done like thia despite being animals.

12. Perform circumambulation on foot. Worship Iśāna, the Lord who is fond of musk, by means of Kalhāra flowers rendered fragrant by means of musk.

13. Utilise whatever property and wealth you have in renovating the temples, the ramparts and ornamented gateways etc. (of Śiva).

14. Ere long you will have the full *Siddhi* to a very great extent, surpassing that of Manu, Māndhātṛ, Nābhāga and Bhagiratha.

Nandikeśvara said:

15. On hearing these (words) of those two Vidyādharas who immediately resorted to their own abodes the King became devoted to the Lord of Aruṇādri with a mind free from all doubts.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Vajrāṅgada Attains Salvation

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1. O Lord Nandīśa, the wonderful narrative of the two Vidyādharas, the narrative that is like the nectarine moon issuing forth from the ocean of the greatness of Bhava, has been heard.

2. When did Vajrāṅgada attain *Siddhi*? How did he worship the Lord? How did the Lord of Aruṇa bless that humble devotee?

Nandikeśvara replied:

3. The King set aside all wish of returning to his own city. He desired to make his residence in the neighbourhood of its valley.

4. Then his great army consisting of hundreds of divisions

of elephants, horses and foot soldiers reached that place following the footsteps of the horse.

5. The King, a veritable ocean of fortitude and courage of that type, was met by the priests, ministers, vassals, kings, generals and excellent friends.

6. When that army arrived the King reverentially stationed it beyond the border of Aruṇādri.

7. The devout King assigned all the wealth in his treasury and all the territories of great productive capacity for the worship of the Lord of Śoṇādri.

8. As directed by his priest he got his own penance grove built in the vicinity of the hermitage of Gautama. There accompanied by his ministers he became engaged in the worship of Śiva.

9. He placed his son named Ratnāṅgada in his position (i.e. throne). He propitiated Śoṇeśa by means of the enormous wealth sent by him.

10. As *Agrahāra* ('grant for sustenance of Brāhmaṇas') he donated villages around Aruṇācala—villages which were abounding in reservoirs (like wells etc.) full of water and orchards bearing an abundance of fruits.

11. Thanks to the splendour of Lord Aruṇa in the form of a Column of Effulgence, he built hundreds of tanks and lakes in this place which was mostly a desert and a wasteland.

12. Being of a long-ranged vision, he granted very beautiful and excellent ladies from among his attendants for the sake of service unto Śoṇanātha.

13. Since he was solely devoted to the worship of the Lord of Śoṇādri, he was congratulated by Agastya who had come there accompanied by Lopāmudrā.

14. Everyday he took the holy bath in the lake called Navatīrtha and with very great purity he worshipped Pāpanāśa and Pravāleśa.

15. The Lord of human beings propitiated everyday Goddess Durgā who had destroyed Mahiṣāsura and who dispels distress due to sins.

16. He rendered various sorts of services every moment to

the primordial Lord who is in the form of a Liṅga and who is worthy of being worshipped by Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

17. He used to get up very early in the morning. After taking his bath the King performed three circumambulations on foot repeating the five-syllabled *Mantra*.

18. On the full-moon day in the month of Kārttika he celebrated the great festival of lights pleasing to the Lover of Pārvati and honoured in the three worlds.

19. He performed the ablution of the Three-eyed Lord by means of thousands of gold pots filled with water rendered fragrant with various scents, Kahlāra flowers and camphor.

20. He celebrated the great festival of riding in the chariot most honoured in the three worlds. He celebrated *Tīrthotsava* and other festivals every month beginning with flag-hoisting.

21. Pure in his mind he performed the *Aṅgapradakṣiṇā* (i.e. rolling all the way) of the Śoṇa mountain extending to three *Yojanas* (= 36 kms.).

22. He frequently eulogized (the Lord) repeating the names, O Lord of Aruṇācala, O Ocean of the nectar of sympathy, O Lord accompanied by Aruṇāmbā.

23. Everyday he applied various articles such as *Pañcāmṛta* etc. and anointed (the *Liṅga*) with sandal pastes white with camphor.

24. Beginning it in the morning he worshipped the Lord of Śoṇādri having the form of the Gaṇas by means of Kahlāra flowers dripping with liquefied musk.

25. Pleased with the services and worship of that (King) of great self-control for three years, the Lord of Aruṇādri appeared to him in person.

26. He was seated on the great bull resembling a snow-clad mountain. He was in close embrace with the Goddess seated nearby.

27. Hymns of eulogy about his victory were being sung by Vasiṣṭha and other Brāhmaṇa sages, Nārada and other great sages as well as Nikumbha, Kumbha and other Gaṇas.

28. He warded off the sins of all the worlds by means of benign glances that resembled the waves of the ocean of mercy and that constituted the abodes of Goddess of fortune.

29. On seeing the Lord of the Devas King Vajrāṅgada became extremely glad. (Touching the ground) with the eight limbs of the body he made the obeisance.

30. With palms joined in reverence and kept over the head the King made obeisance hundreds of times. With the clusters of the rays of lustre emanating from his sparkling teeth he seemed to wash his lotus-like feet as he submitted as follows:

Vajrāṅgada said:

31-32. O Lord of Devas, I may have committed many sins out of delusion. But out of them let this transgression of mine be forgiven.

As he said this in exceedingly piteous tone, the Lord, the storehouse of mercy, the Lord of the universe, the Lord of Śoṇa-śaila said to him:

Śrī Maheśvara (Śiva) said:

33. Do not be afraid, O dear one. Welfare unto thee. I have eight *Mūrtis* (i.e. forms). All of them have been freely assigned to all the creatures.

34. Formerly you were Indra. On account of your pride you insulted me as I was stationed on the peak of Kailāsa. Therefore you were paralysed by me.

35. When paralysed thus, you got ashamed. In a moment your pride vanished. You requested me for *Śivajñāna* which is the cause of all prosperity and magnificence.

36. You were then commanded by me: "O Indra, descend to the earth and take incarnation as King Vajrāṅgada. Then you will obtain my grace."

37. Thereafter, this holy spot was evolved through (my) power. This is my resort. You had been foolish an nce you were punished. But (now) you are my great devotee.

38. Now I am much delighted on account of your supreme services performed by you day and night, O King. So I am enlightening you.[1]

1. The following verses (39-44) give the tenets of Pāśupatism in a nutshell.

39. Ether, wind, fire, water, earth, the sun, the moon and *Pumān* (man i.e. Hotṛ)—these are my physical forms, and through these the universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings shines.

40. I am Kāla ('Time') and I reckon all the objects, living beings and the paths. I am Śiva also, beyond all the *Tattwas* (i.e. Principles). There is nothing other than I.

41. I am the boundless vast ocean of *Cit* ('Consciousness') and *Ānanda* ('Bliss'). A few waves have risen from me. They call them Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Indra etc.

42. Vāṇī, Lakṣmī, Kṣamā, Śraddhā, Prajñā, Svāhā, Svadhā etc. are my creative powers (*Śaktis*). I possess innumerable great *Śaktis*.

43. This is Gaurī, my greatest *Śakti*. She is Māyā, the mother of the universe. It is by her that this universe is constantly enveloped and revealed and expanded.

44. Accompanied by this Śakti I carry on the illusory show of creation, sustenance and annihilation. Thereby I watch and witness as I please this wonderfully variegated and picturesque universe.

45. Your delusion has been dispelled by my greatness. You consider yourself not different from me, like a wave which is not different from the ocean.

46. Thereafter attain the overlordship of the earth which is only one of my forms. By my favour, O great King, enjoy worldly pleasures to your satisfaction.

47. Again in the capacity of Purandara enjoy heavenly pleasures for a long time, O King; certainly you will attain the identity of form with me.

Nandikeśvara said:

48. After saying thus the Lord vanished. King Vajrāṅgada was contented. Worshipping the Lord of Śoṇa he attained all types of pleasures.

49. Thus, it has been mentioned to you, O good soul, how a devotee of Śiva develops and prospers. The eternal benefit of the circumambulation of Śoṇaśaila has also been recounted.

50. What need is there of more (superfluous) talk? The

circumambulation of Śoṇaśaila excels even a hundred great horse-sacrifices.

51. One shall attain innumerable benefits by circumambulating Śoṇagiri on equinoctical days, days on which the Sun takes another transit, the transit from one Zodiac to another, on *Vyatīpāta* days and other *Parvan* days.

52. There is no greater holy spot than Aruṇa; there is no greater Lord than Aruṇeśvara; there is no greater penance than circumambulation (of Aruṇācala).

53. As Nandikeśvara narrated thus the son of Mṛkaṇḍu had a thrill of joy making his hair stand on end all over his body. He frequently shed tears of delight. It was as though he was immersed in the ocean of nectar.

:: End of Aruṇācalamāhātmya ::
:: End of Māheśvarakhaṇḍa ::

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